

PETER KROPOTKIN



READER ON HISTORY



**PRINCIPLES, PROPOSITIONS &
DISCUSSIONS**

FOR LAND & FREEDOM

AN INTRODUCTORY WORD TO THE
'ANARCHIVE'

"Anarchy is Order!"

*'I must Create a System or be enslav'd by
another Man's.*

*I will not Reason & Compare: my business
is to Create'*

(William Blake)

During the 19th century, anarchism has developed as a result of a social current which aims for freedom and happiness. A number of factors since World War I have made this movement, and its ideas, disappear little by little under the dust of history.

After the classical anarchism - of which the Spanish Revolution was one of the last representatives-a 'new' kind of resistance was founded in the sixties which claimed to be based (at least partly) on this anarchism. However this resistance is often limited to a few (and even then partly misunderstood) slogans such as 'Anarchy is order', 'Property is theft',...

Information about anarchism is often hard to come by, monopolised and intellectual; and therefore visibly disappearing. The 'anarchive' or 'anarchist archive' Anarchy is Order (in short **A.O**) is an attempt to make the **'principles, propositions and discussions'** of this tradition available again for anyone it concerns. We believe

that these texts are part of our own heritage. They don't belong to publishers, institutes or specialists.

These texts thus have to be available for all anarchists and other people interested. That is one of the conditions to give anarchism a new impulse, to let the 'new anarchism' outgrow the slogans. This is what makes this project relevant for us: we must find our roots to be able to renew ourselves. We have to learn from the mistakes of our socialist past. History has shown that a large number of the anarchist ideas remain standing, even during the most recent social-economic developments.

'Anarchy Is Order' does not make profits, everything is spread at the price of printing- and papercosts. This of course creates some limitations for these archives.

Everyone is invited to spread along the information we give . This can be done by copying our leaflets, printing from the CD that is available or copying it, e-mailing the texts ,...Become your own anarchiv!!!

(Be aware though of copyright restrictions. We also want to make sure that the anarchist or non-commercial printers, publishers and authors are not being harmed. Our priority on the other hand remains to spread the ideas, not the ownership of them.)

The anarchiv offers these texts hoping that values like **freedom, solidarity and direct action** get a new meaning and will be lived again; so that the struggle continues against the

*'demons of flesh and blood, that sway
scepters down here;
and the dirty microbes that send us dark
diseases and wish to
squash us like horseflies;
and the will-'o-the-wisp of the saddest
ignorance'.
(L-P. Boon)*

The rest depends as much on you as it depends on us. Don't mourn, Organise!

Comments, questions, criticism, cooperation can be send to

A.O@advalvas.be

A complete list and updates are available on this address, new texts are always

welcome!!

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CHRONOLOGY OF PETER **KROPOTKIN'S LIFE**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1842: Peter Kropotkin is born on December 9 to Aleksei Petrovich Kropotkin and Yekaterina Nikolaevna Sulima. Aleksei was a relatively wealthy army officer and came from a noble lineage (Peter was in fact a prince). Although he maintained strict military discipline at home, Aleksei's military career was not terribly successful. Aleksi met Yekaterina during a military campaign in 1831. The couple had four children: Nikolai (1834), Yelena (1835), Alexander (1841), and Peter (1842). Yekaterina, the daughter of a Cossack army officer, was an artistically gifted person who enjoyed reading, writing and painting. Peter remained close to Alexander and Yelena throughout his life.

1846: Peter's mother died of consumption. This left Peter and his siblings care to their rather strict father. While both Peter and Alexander were too young to remember many experiences with their mother they both felt a strong feeling of devotion to her throughout their lives.

1848: Peter's father married (at the request of his commanding officer) Yelizaveta Mar'kovna Korandino. Yelizaveta caused a great deal of

tension in the house. An aggressive, domineering woman, she attempted to erase all traces of the children's departed mother rather than offering them comfort. These actions caused further resentment between the children and their father.

1853: Nikolai leaves the family home for military service in the Crimean War. He left just before Peter began to become impressionable. As a result, he did not have a tremendous amount of impact on Peter's life. According to Peter, he left at the first opportunity available because, of all the children, he had the worst relationship with their father. Even after he won the Cross of St. George for Bravery, and was subsequently promoted to officer, he was unable to win the favor of their father. After the war, he developed a drinking problem, which eventually led to his removal from military service and installation in a monastery. In 1864 he escaped and was never heard from again.

1856: Alexander left home to live at the Moscow Cadet Corps. Peter and Alexander had spent a great deal of their early lives together. The void that Alexander's absence created was filled by Nikolai Pavlovich Smirnov, Peter's Russian tutor. While Peter had other tutors, he and Smirnov were able to forge a friendship.

Much of Peter's early intellectual development was inspired by Smirnov.

Around this time Peter also entered the First Moscow Gymnasium. He was not terribly impressed with the school, feeling that "all the subjects were taught in the most senseless manner." Part of the problem was that this was Peter's first exposure to a group learning experience. Despite his dislike for the school, he managed to receive an excellent grade in geometry and found pleasure in history and geography.

1857: In August of 1857, Peter began a new phase in his life when he entered the Corps of Pages. Perhaps because of his resentment towards his father Peter openly rebelled against the various forms of authority at the Corps. Due to a difference in interests, Peter also found it extremely difficult to relate to his classmates. Rather than merge with the group, Peter spent his time reading books, writing letters and publishing a journal. During this time, Peter and Alexander grew very close through their written correspondence.

1858: Peter's writings suggest that at this time he became intensely interested in the fields of political economy and statistics. He even did significant research at the Nikol'skoe trade fair in order to develop a statistical analysis of all products bought and sold and their prices.

While his intentions had been to develop a better understanding of statistics, this experience provided him with something much more important. This was his first real contact with peasants.

1861: This is perhaps one of the most important years in Russian history. At this time, all Russians peasants became emancipated. This action greatly effected many of the social and economic conditions of Russia for decades to come. Peter strongly supported this move and felt awe for Tsar Alexander II because he thought this proved that the Tsar was a great reformer.

In this same year, Peter first experienced what it was like to lose one's liberty. The Corps received a new assistant director who removed many of the benefits granted to upperclassmen. For his part in the resulting protest, Peter spent several weeks in the Crospsi prison. This was really Peter's first experience acting with revolutionary behavior.

Despite this run-in with authority, Peter still entered his final year as first in his class. Because of this, he was appointed to be page de chambre of the Emperor during his final year of classes. This was an important step toward a distinguished career in the military. In this position, Peter spent a great deal of time in the court's social functions. Due to this exposure, Peter lost much of his confidence in

Tsar. He saw the wasteful extravagance of the court. When he compared this to the peasant's working and living conditions that he had witnessed at the Nikol'skoe trade fair, Peter could no longer respect the Tsar.

1862: As Peter's graduation neared, he began to consider his future. Because of his rank in his class, he knew that he would have his choice of commissions. Because of his interest in math, he strongly considered attending the Artillery Academy. However, due to his developing disillusionment with the government, he decided not to attend the academy. Instead he sought a position in which he could change social conditions, and, in doing so, help the lower classes of Russian society.

The one place that he felt that he could do this was Siberia. Unfortunately, both his father and his schoolmasters were reluctant to support this career choice. It was only because of Peter's heroics during a fire at the Apraksin Palace that he was finally allowed to join the Siberian service. This marked the beginning of a decade of wandering for Peter. When he arrived in Siberia, in October, Peter was placed under the command of General Kukel. His projects were exactly what Peter had hoped for. To Peter, Kukel represented a liberal reformer who could begin to make significant changes in Russia.

One of Peter's first projects in Siberia was to serve as secretary of a prison reform committee. On scheduled visits to the prisons, the committee witnessed the deplorable conditions first hand. A set of proposed reforms was drawn up and sent to St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, the recommendations were largely ignored. Peter was, however, deeply affected by the inhumanity that he saw in the prisons.

In November of 1862, Peter was sent to investigate the activities of an official named Markovich. There had been reports that Markovich had been abusing his power by robbing and beating peasants. By talking to the peasants governed by Markovich, Peter was able to gather enough evidence to have Markovich removed from his post. Peter became bitterly disappointed in the events that followed this dismissal. Markovich was related to the governor of Irkutsk, Ye. M. Zhukovskii. He used his power to have Markovich appointed to a higher position in another province shortly after the dismissal. This furthered Peter's disillusionment with government.

1863: This disillusionment only increased as time passed in Siberia. In February, Kukel was ordered by Zhukovskii to report to Irkutsk. Apparently Kukel had been implicated in Michael Bakunin's escape from Siberia. In addition to this charge, Zhukovskii did not

agree with the sympathetic manner in which Kukel treated many of the exiles. As a result of these accusations, Kukel was removed from his post. It was conceivable to Peter that the system allowed men like Markovich and Zhukovskii to remain in power, while Kukel was relieved of his duties.

In order to get away from his post temporarily, Peter volunteered to lead a string of barges down the Amur River. The supplies carried on the barges were essential to the survival of several villages along the river. This trip allowed Peter to escape the disappointments and strains that he had experienced thus far in Siberia. During the trip, his diary shows that he was quite happy being surrounded by nature. Unfortunately, nature took a turn for the worse. During a storm, all 43 barges were lost.

As he traveled back, he did have a chance to see what the peasant's lives were really like. He also saw the results of the government's grand plan: the exiles in Siberia were put to work and with luck they would turn into excellent laborers. In reality these people had merely been forced into a life of slavery. Peter realized that the government's plan would never work.

Due to the value of the lost barges, Peter was required to personally report to St. Petersburg in November. He hoped that he could persuade the official to improve the ships used

on the Amur to avoid future accidents. He made little progress when faced with the St. Petersburg bureaucracy, however. After much effort, the minister of war, Miliutin, finally seemed to take Peter seriously. He requested that Peter develop a formal report of the accident and the proposal for improved ships for the ministry. Peter would find out much later that his suggestions had not been implemented.

1864: In January, Peter returned to Siberia thinking that he had finally begun to make progress. Before his departure, he had been appointed official of special missions in Eastern Siberia. He brought with him a copy of John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*. When arrived in Irkutsk in February, he began to criticize the government through articles in various publications. He called for studies of the Amur region so that the government's decisions would no longer harm the residents of the region. Although this criticism attracted the attention of many officials in the Siberian administration, no disciplinary action was taken.

By May, Peter had become so dissatisfied with his work that he considered quitting. However, he did not know which area he would chose to go into if he did quit. As he was becoming more withdrawn from the government's activities, another opportunity came along. He was offered the chance to participate in a geographical survey of Manchuria. Geography

had always been an interest for Peter, so he gladly accepted the offer. He prepared for the expedition by reading all material available for the area to be studied. Peter's diary for June and July (the period of time that he spent in Manchuria) shows that he thoroughly enjoyed the geographical work.

1865: Peter dedicated himself entirely to geographical work during this year. This work would eventually gain him fame among the geographic community. It also served to help him forget the many troubles that many of the people in his country faced.

1866: In this year, Peter finally realized that he had to leave the military. This decision stemmed from two events. The first took place when Peter visited the Lena gold mines on an expedition. The conditions here were even worse than those that Peter had experienced in other towns in the Amur region were. A series of letters to his brother conveys Peter's shock at the manner in which workers were treated. He suggested that the only way to remedy the situation would be to drastically alter the existing economic system.

The second event occurred in June. A group of Polish exiles staged an uprising with the hope of escaping to China. The Siberian administration quickly took care of the situation by sending in the army. The army restored order, and the five leaders of the uprising were shot. Given, the conditions that

he had just witnessed at the Lena gold mines, Peter understood why the Poles would want to escape. Furthermore, he could not justify to himself the use of the army when the revolt posed no real threat to anybody. In the next few months Peter immersed himself in reading, studying works by J.S. Mill, Renan, Heine, Herzen, and Proudhon.

1867: In April, Peter finally left Irkutsk and returned to St. Petersburg. Although he had left military service, Peter could not bring himself to leave government service. He became a member of the Central Statistical Committee. This position required very little work and allowed Peter to concentrate on work for the Geographic Society. He also enrolled in the university, but did not complete the requirements for graduation due to financial concerns.

1868-1870: Peter concentrated on geographic work.

1871: In the fall, Peter's father died. His father had maintained a great deal of control over Peter's life. When he finally passed away, Peter finally had control over his own life. At this point, he quit his civil service position. The Imperial Geographic Society offered him the position of secretary (a great honor for a man of his age). Peter viewed a career in the Society as wasteful and declined the offer. Peter had become interested in the worker's movement during the Franco-Prussian War

due to the newspaper coverage of the Paris Commune. In this period of transition within his life, Peter planned to travel abroad to learn more about the worker's movement.

1872: In February Peter left Russia to travel to Switzerland. Upon arriving in Zurich Peter immediately joined the local chapter of the International. He was given socialist literature unavailable in Russia. After reading numerous works on socialism, Peter continued his vigorous study of the subject by traveling throughout Switzerland to question various socialist leaders. At this time, he began to attend the worker's meetings of the International (rather than the leader's meetings). In March, a friend suggested that Peter visit the centers of the Jura Federation in Neuchatel.

In Neuchatel, Peter met Guillaume, one of Bakunin's closest associates. Peter received a positive impression of both Guillaume and the Jura Federation. Fascinated by the lack of organization in the federation, he wished to see it in action. To see the Jura workers themselves, Peter traveled to Sonvilier, where he met another Federation leader, Adhemar Schwitzguebel. He introduced Peter to the workers in the region, most of which were watchmakers. The isolated and self-sufficient nature of the workers impressed Peter. He saw a community of workers that succeeded when permitted to work according to their own interests. It is at this exact point in his life

where he felt that he became an anarchist. He even considered staying in Switzerland as a permanent fixture in the Jura Federation. Guillaume convinced him that this was impractical. One of the great ironies of this trip was that despite being separated by only a small distance, Peter never met Bakunin. This was probably their best chance, but for various reasons, Peter did not travel to Locarno to meet Bakunin. As a result, the two most prominent Russian anarchists never met.

When he returned to Russia in May, Peter brought with him a large collection of socialist literature which were "unconditionally prohibited by the censor." This was his first subversive act against the state. He took this tremendous risk so that he could share these works with his brother. Encouraged partially by this literature, Alexander traveled to Switzerland to meet with the socialists himself. As a result of this trip, he sided with Lavrov's forces. This side was rival to Peter's side. Luckily, this did not cause much friction between brothers. The choice of sides reflected the personality of each brother.

Upon his return, Peter was anxious to share his findings with others. The subject matter, however, made this type of activity very risky. Peter had to find a group of people that he could trust. He found this trust in the Chaikovskii Circle, a group formed to spread revolutionary consciousness throughout Russia. He did have some difficulty in joining

this group. He possessed different ideological views than several leaders in the Circle, and he was seven to ten years older than most members of the Circle. Some felt that he would be unable or unwilling to fully contribute to the Circle's cause.

1873: Peter proved his critics wrong with his work on the committee heading the knizhnoe delo. This committee was formed to change the type of socialist literature available to the peasants. At this time, only intellectual approaches had been taken. The Chaikovskii Circle felt that this type of literature would not encourage the peasants to revolt. Instead, they needed to be provided with stories of successful revolts by the masses. The actual writing of these pamphlets would also have to be extremely simple, due to the lack of education among the working class. These pamphlets were well received by the peasants, and eventually the government deemed them to be "extremely harmful" and outlawed them. While Peter was only solely responsible for writing one of the pamphlets, he did have an important influence on the development of the committee.

By the summer, Peter began to become involved in other projects within the Circle. However, when he sold one of his family estates, he refused to give any money to the Circle, an action that angered many. There was further tension as the Circle questioned whether they should take sides in the battle

for power between Bakunin and Lavrov. Peter felt that siding with Lavrov (as many in the Circle wanted to) would negate much of their progress in planting the seeds of revolt in the workers.

Peter had become very involved with the workers themselves through the rabochee delo activities of the Circle. Involvement in this committee required Peter to give lectures to worker groups. Often, he would disguise himself as a peasant named Borodin to both throw off the police and to better relate to the peasants (his target audience). Because of this and his exposure to the working class throughout his early life, Peter experienced much more success than other lectures. Furthermore, he greatly enjoyed being directly involved with the workers and witnessing the impact that his words had on them. They hoped that the lectures would eventually allow the workers to unite and overthrow the existing system of government.

1874: Before the Chaikovskii Circle could complete their goals, they experienced a significant set back. In March, the apartment of a student was raided by the police. Inside, the police found copies of a revolutionary manifesto authored by P. A. Kropotkin. Although this manifesto was Peter's first major political statement, the police concluded that he was the leader of the entire *khozhdenie v narod* (movement to the people). When Kropotkin found out about the discovery, he

immediately planned to leave the country. However, before leaving, Peter wanted to present a paper to the Geographic Society. He had all of his belongings packed so that he could leave after his presentation. The paper was well received and it looked as though Peter would be able to escape. As he entered a cab, he was approached by another cab filled with workers. Peter, thinking that the workers had escaped arrest and may need his assistance, got out of the cab to talk to the workers. As soon as he was out of the cab, a group of police officers emerged from the workers cab and arrested Peter, not as Prince Peter Kropotkin, but as Bordoin, anarchist peasant.

As Peter had been delivering his paper, the police had searched his apartment. Inside they found Peter's diary, many of his books and writings that he and others had done, all of which was incriminating evidence. Peter was questioned at great length, but refused to give any information. The police eventually bribed workers to testify against Peter. Given that information, he was moved to the infamous Peter and Paul Fortress in April.

The conditions in this fortress were extremely harsh. The cells were damp and often kept uncomfortably warm. The prisoners were separated, so Peter would go for weeks at a time with no human contact. Writing was not allowed in the prison, a great punishment for an intellectual like Peter. There were only two

activities that allowed Peter to keep his sanity, reading and exercise. Most of what Peter read involved science and history and was provided to him by his sister and brother. Each day he was allowed to stroll on the prison grounds. This short time did not satisfy Peter. He spent many additional hours pacing in his cell.

Peter's academic and family contacts eventually started to affect his treatment. In September, the Geographic Society was able to convince the prison officials to give Peter special permission to write and work on several geographic papers for several hours each day. The result was a large study on glacial periods that was published in 1876.

1875: By the middle of this year, more political prisoners had been arrested and the fortress was becoming filled. The silence that had existed when Peter first arrived at the prison was now broken. The prisoners eventually worked out a system of communication through knocking. About this time Peter received an unexpected visitor. One afternoon Grand Prince Nikolai Nikolaevich, the brother of the czar, entered Peter's cell totally unannounced. This was an unprecedented action. The Grand Prince had come to meet Peter in an attempt to understand why a man of such noble status would become involved in a revolutionary movement. The meeting did not go well as each man disliked the other, and felt the other was a danger to society. The

Grand Prince left the cell without further understanding of Peter's reasoning.

By the end of this year, Peter was beginning to lose hope. The interrogations had continued, and the police resorted to all sorts of means to attempt to get Peter to confess. At this time, his health was beginning to deteriorate. The damp, warm conditions of his cell had led to Peter contracting rheumatism. In December, the Ministry of Justice ordered that Peter be moved to the St. Petersburg House of Detention since his trial was nearing. Peter had spent 21 months in the Peter and Paul Fortress.

1876: After Peter was moved to the Detention House, his living conditions improved. This was because the House was, in Peter's words, "a huge showplace for foreign visitors." Peter was allowed to openly interact with friends and relatives now. Despite the improved living conditions, Peter's health continued to deteriorate. His new cell was much smaller than the one in the Peter and Paul Fortress (four feet wide), and Peter would get dizzy when he tried to continue his walking routine. After a short time, he began to suffer from claustrophobia.

His sister became extremely worried about his health. She managed to convince a physician to suggest that Peter be transferred to a military hospital until his health improved. In May, he was finally transferred to the St.

Petersburg Military Hospital. This was significant for several reasons. First, Peter finally got the necessary treatment to improve his mental and physical health. Almost immediately, he began to feel better. However, he did not let this be known to his doctors. This brings us to second reason why Peter's transfer to the hospital is of importance; the security was much more lax at this institution than any other. Peter immediately began working on a plan for escape.

By the end of June, Peter had come with an elaborate plan to escape during one of his daily walks on the hospital grounds. Many other people were to be involved in distracting the guards, signaling that the coast was clear for the escape, and to drive Peter away in a carriage. When the day of the escape arrived, disaster struck. His accomplices could not find any red balloons, which was to be the sign that the coast was clear. The escape did not happen on that day, and for that Peter was lucky. A line of peasant carts had been blocking the escape route. If Peter had tried to escape, he surely would have been recaptured.

During the next 24 hours, Peter's friends worked frantically to come up with a new plan. After much work, they made the necessary changes to Peter's original plan. One problem remained, they had to let Peter know what the changes were. This was accomplished by hiding a written summary of the plan inside a watch. Then, one of Peter's close friends,

visited him, giving him the watch as a gift. Peter was told to examine the watch carefully. When he did, he found the note. He now knew of the new plan. The next day everything went as planned. Peter escaped from the prison, and none of his accomplices were apprehended. That night, the group celebrated in one of St. Petersburg's finest restaurants. They guessed (correctly) that the police would never look for them here. The next day Peter left Russia at the Finnish border. From Finland he took a ship to England.

Peter's first few months in England were spent establishing contacts. His main objective was to let Guillaume know that he wanted to work for the Jura Federation again. Guillaume was delighted to hear this and asked Peter to begin writing articles for the Bulletin de la Federation Jurassienne. He also spent some time writing for the Imperial Geographic Society. However, his primary interests laid with the worker's movement.

1877: In January, Peter left England to live in the Neuchatel region, in Switzerland, so that he could devote all of his time to the Jura Federation. When he returned to the federation, he found that it had lost much of its energy that he had seen in 1872. Much of the problems stemmed from the lack of leadership in the federation. This seemed to cause a lack of direction, and Peter felt that they had very little effect on the worker's movement. One person in the group that Peter was attracted to

was Paul Brousse. Peter and Brousse organized a demonstration in Bern on March 18 to commemorate the Paris Commune. Peter helped that this bit of unrest would help stir the workers. Some members of the Federation feared that there would be clashes with the police at the demonstration. This is actually what Peter hoped for. He knew that police intervention would make great propaganda.

The clash with the police did occur. The group carried the red flag in honor of the commune. Switzerland law outlawed the public display of the flag. The police attempted to seize the flags from the protesters through force. Six or seven of the police officers were injured along with several protesters. The police failed, however, in seizing all of the flags. The flags were carried to a hall where speeches were given. Overall the day was a huge success. The police brutality had a tremendous effect on the workers. The size of the federation nearly doubled after the demonstration. Guillaume disagreed with Peter's assessment that the demonstration had been a success. Guillaume disapproved of the violent tactics that had been used which caused a division to begin between Peter and him.

During the next few years, Peter became very involved in social congresses. In September, he attended the last meeting of the International. The organization had become doomed when Marx moved the headquarters to New York. As the International was falling

apart, Peter saw problems developing between the North and South sections of the Jura Federation. These divisions undermined many of the resolutions passed at this meeting.

The week after the International meeting, Peter attended the Universal Socialist Congress in Ghent. Although he had been named one of the two secretaries of the session, Peter was forced to leave the Congress early when he learned that the police were looking for him. Fearing that the Belgium authorities would extradite him back to Russia, he left the country, traveling to England. After a short time, he returned to Switzerland.

1878: Peter spent much of this year working with to strengthen the Jura Federation. By August, he had developed his first major political program. This program was presented at the annual Jura congress. There were some major figures from the Federation present, however, Guillaume and Bakunin were not present (Guillaume because he was no longer active and Bakunin because he was no longer alive). Their absence left a void, which Peter sought to fill. His program was composed of four parts:

1. collectivism
2. the negation of the state
3. acceptance of the social revolution and the end of capitalism
4. propaganda of the deed (violence) as a means to end the state

Peter hoped for a society influenced by the Paris Commune. He hoped that by improving the living conditions of the working class that their work initiative would also improve. This would be the beginning of the social revolution.

1879: Peter realized that the Jura Federation was not in a condition from which it could properly organize a revolution. Therefore during most of this year, Peter worked with Brousse to reorganize the Federation. Their efforts peaked at the Federation congress in October. Most of the old leadership was no longer involved with the Federation, so Peter saw this as an opportunity to move its efforts in a new direction. He gave a speech entitled "The Anarchist Idea from the Viewpoint of Its Practical Realization." This speech laid out Peter's plans for the future. While much of the argument is similar to the views expressed at the previous congress, Peter also argued that the anarchists should not become a political party. These ideas were generally well accepted at the congress.

Sometime during this year, Peter was quietly married.

1880: Peter was the leading force at the Federation congress in this year. While he did not formulate any major new stances here, he did work to refine many of the views that the Jura Federation held. At this point, the

Federation began to move away from its traditional views, which had been developed by Bakunin, and towards the views expressed by Peter. The primary differences arose in the question of wages. Bakunin had supported a system in which wages were based on the type and amount of work performed. Peter preferred the idea that the means of production and survival could be evenly divided among all those in a society. His speeches at this time formed an important basis for the socialist movement.

1881: In July of this year, Peter attended the International Anarchist Congress in London. The records of this congress show that Peter played an important role in its leadership. This is significant because it shows that Peter is beginning to gain acceptance in revolutionary circles outside the Jura Federation. At this congress Peter also clarifies his views on violence as a means of encouraging revolution. Although he still has problems justifying all types of violence, he states that an explosion is far more effective than a vote. However, it should be the terrorist act of the people rather than an individual.

Throughout these years, Peter was also very active in journalism. Besides writing for the Jura Bulletin, he did work for the Arbeiter Zeitung, L'Avant-Garde, La Justice, and started his own paper LeRevolte. The topics of these articles ranged from ideological positions on

economics to the debate over the propaganda of deed.

He wrote several articles on the subject of propaganda of deed after Czar Alexander II was assassinated in March of this year. Peter saw this event as a sign that social revolution was near. The assassination resulted in numerous executions in Russia. Peter called for public protests of these actions. These calls for protests, along with Peter's support for the Czar's execution, led to his expulsion from Switzerland in August.

At about the same time, the new Czar of Russia, Alexander III, formed the Holy Brotherhood. This was a secret organization formed to start a counteroffensive against revolutionaries. One of the Brotherhood's first actions was to issue two death warrants. One was for Lev Gartman, a member of the Narodnaia Volia and the other was for Peter Kropotkin. Luckily Peter found out about this plot and exposed it in his own paper and in the London Times and Newcastle Chronicle. The Russian government was deeply embarrassed by the exposure and recalled the agents. This event did convince Peter that he should not return to Russia. Instead, he traveled throughout England giving lectures and writing articles for various publications.

1882: For most of this year, Peter busied himself with writing articles about Russia for the Newcastle Chronicle. The subject of most

of these articles regarded the treatment of the working class in Russia and corruption of the government. Despite earning an impressive reputation, Peter was not happy in England. He felt that there was no worker's movement in England nor were there any major social organizations for him to become involved with. In October, moved to the French town of Thonon. Unfortunately, his reputation as an anarchist preceded him. He was in France only two months before he was arrested and sentenced to five years in prison for his involvement in the International (which no longer existed).

1883-1886: Peter spent these three years in a French prison, despite a strong international effort to free him. The conditions in the French prison, while not good, were much better than those of the Russian prisons. Peter was allowed to see his wife, read non-political works and write on a limited basis. One of Peter's strongest supporters during this time was Elisée Reclus. Reclus supplied Peter with scientific works and worked continually to improve Peter's living conditions. Finally in January of 1886, the French government decided that Peter would be less of a threat if he was out of the country. He was released under the conditions that he would leave as soon as possible.

1886: Several weeks after his release from prison, Peter returned to England. The time in prison had clearly taken its role on him

though. He had very little energy to engage in revolutionary activities. Later in the year Peter experienced two personal hardships. First, his wife became seriously ill with typhus. She did eventually recover. Second, Peter's brother Alexander committed suicide while exiled in Siberia for a political offence. This was especially hard on Peter since they had been so close to each other. Alexander's wife came to live with Peter until she recovered from the tragedy.

When Peter found the time and energy over the next few years, he did give several lectures around England and attempted to establish an anarchist newspaper in England.

1890's: During this decade Peter's popularity in England peaked. He was a friend with many notable scholars in England at the time. Due to illness, however, he stopped lecturing almost completely. In the spring of 1896 Peter was invited to France to help raise funds to restart *La Revolte*. The French authorities met him just as he was about to leave England and stopped him. In 1897, he was invited to visit Canada for the British Association for the Advancement of Science. After visiting Canada, Peter, traveled through the United States, giving several lectures. He was disappointed that his lectures were so poorly attended in places such as Boston and New York. He was pleased though that the *Atlantic Monthly* agreed to publish his memoirs.

Much of Peter's time was taken up by writing. Aside from continually writing articles for various revolutionary publications, we also continued work on three separate books: Fields, Factories, and Workshops, Mutual Aid, and Ethics. In these books and articles, Peter attempted to develop an anarchist-communism view of society.

1901: Peter again visited America. The trip was especially hard on him, and during this year he told Guillaume that he did not have long to live.

1901-1909: Peter began to become more involved in Russian politics again, perhaps sensing that a social revolution was near. He helped start a Russian anarchist paper, the *Khleb i volia*, in 1903. This anarchist paper was different than others Peter had wrote for before. Previously, he had enjoyed a great deal of control over the content of the papers. Now, because of his position within the paper, he could only hope to control the content through his influence. This became a problem in 1904 when he disagreed with the paper's treatment of terrorism. He felt that promoting violence in Russia from abroad was irresponsible and could possibly turn away potential supporters for the revolutionary movement. The paper ended in 1905.

In 1905, there was a social uprising in Russia that gave Peter hope that perhaps a new social order was near. A series of meetings were held

between 1905 and 1907 among anarchists to discuss how to handle to the Russian revolution. Peter even considered travelling to Russia to help the anarchist cause. The Russian State was eventually able to put down the revolution. This deeply disappointed Peter. He began to see possible weaknesses in the revolutionary effort. As a result of these reflections, he totally renounced radical journalism and devoted himself to books.

In the time that followed the Russian revolt, radical groups experienced problems as police and government agents attempted to infiltrate their ranks. In 1908, Peter acted as a judge in a tribunal where a gentleman was accused of being a double agent. Peter did not feel comfortable in the role of judge, and felt that the whole trial accomplished very little.

During this time Peter also published books on Russian literature and the French Revolution, demonstrating the breadth of his scholarly ability.

1909-1914: His health continued to worsen during this time. He tried moving to Brighton, which was warmer than London. In 1908, he began to spend his winters in Italy and Switzerland to escape to damp English winters. In 1913, he convinced the Swiss authorities to allow him to permanently reside in Switzerland. They allowed him on the condition that he refrain from all anarchist activities.

In February of 1912, the workers at one of the Lena gold mines (which Peter had visited earlier in his life) went on strike demanding better working conditions. In an attempt to break up the strike, soldiers fired into a crowd of people, killing 270 and wounding 240. Peter immediately tried to publicize this event, hoping that it would lead to further worker revolts. Other gold mines went on strike to protest this event. However, before a revolution could begin, World War I distracted everyone.

1914-1917: Peter's stance on World War I was very clear. He encouraged every country to rise in arms against Germany. He told everyone that was important that France be protected from the Germans. This was because he felt that France would be the country, which would inspire the world to social equality and liberty. He also considered the Germans "an army of Huns," who had no respect for the rules of humanity. Whenever his health permitted he spoke to rally support against Germany.

Peter's excitement stemmed from the possibilities that could occur if Germany was defeated. He realized that the rebuilding process that would follow this type of war could provide the ideal conditions for social change. To Peter, the war against Germany was a war against the state.

1917: The events of February 1917 took almost everyone by surprise. The Russian Revolution was the spontaneous revolution that Peter and others had written about for decades. When it became clear that the revolution was a success, Peter began packing to return to Russia. He did warn people that it was still important to continue the fight against Germany. Only after the war ended would the new Russian society be safe.

Peter arrived in Petrograd on May 30, 1917. Although many revolutionaries were returning at this time, Peter's notoriety caused a large crowd to gather to greet him. The new government even sent representatives to meet with him. He took this opportunity to deliver a rather long speech in which he praised the revolutionaries and urged the defense of Russia against Germany. He was ecstatic that Russia had become the first country in history to guarantee equality to all citizens and nationalities

During the rest of this year, Peter participated in the formation of government policy. He encouraged the adoption of a system similar to that of the United States, where local autonomy was encouraged. His ideas met some resistance though due to the war. Once the Bolsheviks came to power, Peter ended much of his activity with the government.

1918-1921: In 1918, there were some rumors that Peter had been imprisoned by the

Bolsheviks, however he remained free. He was extremely unhappy due both to the uncomfortable living conditions that the civil war had caused and because he saw the rise of the Bolsheviks as a sign that the revolution had failed.

In the remaining years of his life, Peter used the time to finish some of his unfinished works, including *Ethics*. He was offered several positions at various universities, but had to turn them down due to his failing health. He continued to write articles for various publications throughout Europe.

By 1920, his health had deteriorated so much, that he was unable to sustain conversations with his friends. Several people encouraged Peter to move out of Russia to a healthier climate. Peter was content with where he was though. On February 8, 1921, Peter Kropotkin died. With Lenin's personal approval, a huge funeral was arranged by the anarchists. This was the last mass gathering of anarchists in Russia.

THE COMMUNE OF PARIS (1880)

PETER KROPOTKIN

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I. THE PLACE OF THE COMMUNE IN SOCIALIST EVOLUTION

On March 18, 1871 , the people of Paris rose against a despised and detested government, and proclaimed the city independent free, belonging to itself.

This overthrow of the central power took place without the usual stage effects of revolution, without the firing of guns, without the shedding of blood upon barricades. When the armed people came out into the streets, the rulers fled away, the troops evacuated the town, the civil functionaries hurriedly retreated to Versailles carrying everything they could with them. The government evaporated like a pond of stagnant water in a spring breeze, and on the nineteenth the great city of Paris found herself free from the impurity which had defiled her, with the loss of scarcely a drop of her children's blood.

Yet the change thus accomplished began a new era in that long series of revolutions whereby the peoples are marching from slavery to freedom. Under the name "Commune of Paris" a new idea was born, to become the starting point for future revolutions.

As is always the case, this fruitful idea was not the product of some one individual's brain, of the conceptions of some philosopher; it was born of the collective spirit, it sprang from the heart of a whole community. But at first it was vague, and many of those who acted upon and gave their lives for it did not look at it in the light in which we see it today; they did not realize the full extent of the revolution they inaugurated or the fertility of the new principle they tried to put in practice. It was only after they had begun to apply it that its future bearing slowly dawned upon them; it was only afterward, when the new principle came to be thought out, that it grew definite and precise and was seen in all its clearness, in all its beauty, its justice and the importance of its results.

During the five or six years that came before the Commune, socialism had taken a new departure in the spread and rapid growth of the International Workingmen's Association. In its local branches and general congresses the workers of Europe met together and took counsel with another upon the social question as they had never done before. Among those

who saw that social revolution was inevitable and were actively busy in making ready for it, one problem above all others seemed to press for solution. "The existing development of industry will force a great economic revolution upon our society; this revolution will abolish private property, will put in common all the capital piled up by previous generations; but, what form of political grouping will be most suited to these changes in our economic system?"

"The grouping must not be merely national," answered the International Workingmen's Association, it must extend across all artificial frontiers and boundary lines." And soon this grand idea sunk into the hearts of the peoples and took fast hold of their minds. Though it has been hunted down ever since by the united efforts of every species of reactionary, it is alive nevertheless, and when the voice of the peoples in revolt shall melt the obstacles to its development, it will reappear stronger than ever before.

But it still remained to discover what should be the component parts of this vast association.

To this question two answers were given, each the expression of a distinct current of thought. One said the popular state; the other said anarchy.

The German socialists advocated that the state should take possession of all accumulated wealth and give it over to associations of workers and, further, should organize production and exchange, and generally watch over the life and activities of society.

To them the socialists of the Latin race, strong in revolutionary experience, replied that it would be a miracle if such a state could ever exist; but if it could, it would surely be the worst of tyrannies. This ideal of the all powerful and beneficent state is merely a copy from the past, they said; and they confronted it with a new ideal: anarchy, that is, the total abolition of the state, and social organization from the simple to the complex by means of the free federation of popular groups of producers and consumers.

It was soon admitted, even by the more liberal minded state socialists, that anarchy certainly represented a much better sort of organization than that aimed at by the popular state. But, they said, the anarchist ideal is so far off that just now we cannot trouble about it.

At the same time, it was true that the anarchist theory did need some short, clear mode of expression, some formula at once simple and practical, to show plainly its point of departure and embody its conceptions, to indicate how it was supported by an actually existing tendency among the people. A

federation of workers' unions and groups of consumers regardless of frontiers and quite independent of existing states seemed too vague; and, moreover, it was easy to see that it could not fully satisfy all the infinite variety of human requirements. A clearer formula was wanted, one more easily grasped, one which had a firm foundation in the realities of actual life.

If the question had merely been how best to elaborate a theory, we should have said theories, as theories, are not of so very much importance. But as long as a new idea has not found a clear, precise form of statement, growing naturally out of things as they actually exist, it does not take hold of men's minds, does not inspire them to enter upon a decisive struggle. The people do not fling themselves into the unknown without some positive and clearly formulated idea to serve them, so to say, as a springboard when they reach the starting point.

As for this starting point, they must be led up to it by life itself.

For five whole months Paris had been isolated by the German besiegers; for five whole months she had to draw upon her own vital resources and had learned to know the immense economic, intellectual, and moral strength which she possessed. She had caught a glimpse of her own force of initiative and realized what it meant. At the same time she

had seen that the prating crew who seized power had no idea how to organize either the defense of France or its internal development. She had seen the central government at cross purposes with every manifestation of the intelligence of the mighty city. Finally, she had come to realize that any government must be powerless to guard against great disasters or to smooth the path of rapid evolution. During the siege her defenders, her workers, had suffered the most frightful privations, while her idlers reveled in insolent luxury, and thanks to the central government she had seen the failure of every attempt to put an end to these scandals. Each time that her people had showed signs of a desire for a free scope, the government had added weight to their chains. Naturally such experiences gave birth to the idea that Paris must make herself an independent commune, able to realize within her walls the wishes of her citizens.

The Commune of 1871 could be nothing but a first attempt. Beginning at the close of a great war, hemmed in between two armies ready to join hands and crush the people, it dared not unhesitatingly set forth upon the path of economic revolution. It neither boldly declared itself socialist nor proceeded to the expropriation of capital nor the organization of labor. It did not even take stock of the general resources of the city.

Nor did it break with the tradition of the state, of representative government. It did not seek

to effect within the Commune that very organization from the simple to the complex which it inaugurated without, by proclaiming the independence and free federation of communes.

Yet it is certain that if the Commune of Paris could have lived a few months longer, it would have been inevitably driven by the force of circumstances toward both these revolutions. Let us not forget that the French middle class spent altogether four years (from 1789 to 1793) in revolutionary action before they changed a limited monarchy into a republic. Ought we then to be astonished that the people of Paris did not cross with one bound the space between an anarchist commune and the government of the spoilers? But let us also bear in mind that the next revolution, which in France and Spain at least will be communal, will take up the work of the Commune of Paris where it was interrupted by the massacres of the Versailles soldiery.

The Commune was defeated, and too well we know how the middle class avenged itself for the scare given it by the people when they shook their rulers' yoke loose upon their necks. It proved that there really are two classes in our modern society; on one side, the man who works and yields up to the monopolists of property more than half of what he produces and yet lightly passes over the wrong done him by his masters; on the other, the idler, the spoiler, hating his slave, ready to

kill him like game, animated by the most savage instincts as soon as he is menaced in his possession.

After having shut in the people of Paris and closed all means of exit, the Versailles government let loose soldiers upon them; soldiers brutalized by drink and barrack life, who had been publicly told to make short work of "the wolves and their cubs." To the people it was said:

You shall perish, whatever you do! If you are taken with arms in your hands, death! If you use them, death! If you beg for mercy, death! Whichever way you turn, right left, back, forward, up, down; death! You are not merely outside the law, you are outside humanity. Neither age nor sex shall save you and yours. You shall die, but first you shall taste the agony of your wife, your sister, your mother, your sons and daughters, even those in the cradle! Before your eyes the wounded man shall be taken out of the ambulance and hacked with bayonets or knocked down with the butt end of a rifle. He shall be dragged living by his broken leg or bleeding arm and flung like a suffering, groaning bundle of refuse into the gutter. Death! Death! Death!(2)

And after this mad orgy, these piles of corpses, this wholesale extermination, came the petty revenge, the cat o' nine tails, the irons in the ship's hold, the blows and insults of the jailers, the semistarvation, all the refinements of

cruelty. Can the people forget these base deeds?

Overthrown, but not conquered, the Commune in our days is born again. It is no longer a dream of the vanquished, caressing in imagination the lovely mirage of hope. No! the "commune" of today is becoming the visible and definite aim of the revolution rumbling beneath our feet. The idea is sinking deep into the masses, it is giving them a rallying cry. We count on the present generation to bring about the social revolution within the commune, to put an end to the ignoble system of middleclass exploitation, to rid the people of the tutelage of the state, to inaugurate a new era of liberty, equality, solidarity in the evolution of the human race.

II. HOW THE COMMUNE FAILED TO REALIZE ITS TRUE AIM AND YET SET THAT AIM BEFORE THE WORLD

Ten Years already separate us from the day when the people of Paris overthrew the traitor government which raised itself to power at the downfall of the empire; how is it that the oppressed masses of the civilized world are still irresistibly drawn toward the movement of 1871? Why is the idea represented by the Commune of Paris so attractive to the workers of every land, of every nationality?

The answer is easy. The revolution of 1871 was above all a popular one. It was made by the people themselves, it sprang spontaneously from the midst of the mass, and it was among the great masses of the people that it found its defenders, its heroes, its martyrs. It is just because it was so thoroughly "low" that the middle class can never forgive it. And at the same time its moving spirit was the idea of a social revolution; vague certainly, perhaps unconscious, but still the effort to obtain at last, after the struggle of many centuries, true freedom, true equality for all men. It was the revolution of the lowest of the people marching forward to conquer their rights.

Attempts have been and are made to change the sense of this revolution, to represent it as a mere effort to regain the independence of Paris and thus to constitute a tiny state within

France. But nothing can be more untrue. Paris did not seek to isolate herself from France, any more than to conquer it by force of arms; she did not care to shut herself within her walls like a nun in a convent; she was not inspired by the narrow spirit of the cloister. If she claimed her independence, if she tried to hinder the interference of the central power in her affairs, it was because she saw in that independence a means of quietly elaborating the bases of future organization and bringing about within herself a social revolution; a revolution which would have completely transformed the whole system of production and exchange by basing them on justice; which would have completely modified human relations by, putting them on a footing of equality; which would have formed our social morality anew by founding it upon equality and solidarity. Communal independence was then but a means for the people of Paris; the social revolution was their end.

And this end might have been attained if the revolution of March 18 had been able to take its natural course, if the people of Paris had not been cut to pieces by the assassins from Versailles. To find a clear, precise idea, comprehensible to all the world and summing up in a few words what was needed to accomplish the revolution, this was really the preoccupation of the people of Paris from the earliest days of their independence. But a great idea does not germinate in a day, however rapid the elaboration and propagation

of ideas during periods of revolution. It always needs a certain time to develop, to spread throughout the masses, to translate itself into action, and this time the Commune of Paris failed. It failed mostly because as we have before observed, socialism ten years ago was passing through a period of transition. The authoritative and semi-religious communism of 1848 had no longer any hold over the practical, freethinking minds of our epoch. The collectivism which attempted to yoke together the wage system and collective property was incomprehensible, unattractive, and bristling with difficulties in practical application. Free communism, anarchist communism, was only beginning to dawn upon the minds of the workers and scarcely ventured to provoke the attacks of the worshippers of government. Minds were undecided. Socialists themselves, having no definite end in view, did not dare to lay hands upon private property; they deluded themselves with the argument which has lulled the activities of many an age: "Let us first make sure of victory, and then see what can be done."

Make sure of victory! As if there were any way of forming a free commune without laying hands upon property! As if there were any way of conquering the foe while the great mass of the people is not directly interested in the triumph of the revolution, by seeing that it will bring material, moral and intellectual well-being to everybody.

The same thing happened with regard to the principle of government. By proclaiming the free Commune, the people of Paris proclaimed an essential anarchist principle, which was the breakdown of the state.

And yet, if we admit that a central government to regulate the relations of communes between themselves is quite needless, why should we admit its necessity to regulate the mutual relations of the groups which make up each commune? And if we leave the business of coming to a common understanding with regard to enterprises which concern several cities at once to the free initiative of the communes concerned, why refuse this same free initiative to the groups composing a single commune? There is no more reason for a government inside the commune than for a government outside.

But in 1871, the people of Paris, who have overthrown so many governments, were only making their first attempt to revolt against the governmental system itself; consequently they let themselves be carried away by the fetish worship of governments and set up one of their own. The result is a matter of history. Paris sent her devoted sons to the town hall. There, shelved in the midst of files of old papers, obliged to rule when their instincts prompted them to be and to act among the people, obliged to discuss when it was needful to act, to compromise when no compromise was the best policy, and, finally, losing the

inspiration which only comes from continual contact with the masses, they saw themselves reduced to impotence. Being paralyzed by their separation from the people-the revolutionary center of light and heat-they themselves paralyzed the popular initiative. The Commune of Paris, the child of a period of transition, born beneath the Prussian guns, was doomed to perish. But by its eminently popular character it began a new series of revolutions, by its ideas it was the forerunner of the social revolution. Its lesson has been learned, and when France once more bristles with communes in revolt, the people are not likely to give themselves a government and expect that government to initiate revolutionary measures. When they have rid themselves of the parasites who devour them, they will take possession of all social wealth to share according to the principles of anarchist communism. And when they have entirely abolished property government, and the state, they will form themselves freely according to the necessities indicated by life itself. Breaking its chains, overthrowing its idols, humanity will march onward to a better future, knowing neither masters nor slaves, keeping its veneration for the noble martyrs who bought with their blood and suffering those first attempts at emancipation which have enlightened our march toward the conquest of liberty.

III. THE TEACHINGS OF THE COMMUNE IN MODERN SOCIALISM

The public meetings organized on March 18 in almost every town where there is a socialist group are well worthy of careful attention, not merely because they are a demonstration of the army of labor, but also because they afford an opportunity for gauging the sentiments of the socialists of both worlds. They are a better opportunity for "taking a poll" than could be given by any system of voting, an occasion when aspirations may be formulated uninfluenced by electoral party tactics. The workers do not meet simply to praise the heroism of the Parisian proletariat or to call for vengeance for the May massacres, While refreshing themselves with the memory of the brave struggle in Paris, they have gone further and discussed what lessons for the coming revolution must be drawn from the Commune of 1871. They ask what the mistakes of the commune were not for the sake of criticizing the men who made them but to bring out clearly how the prejudices about property and authority, which then reigned among workers' organizations, hindered the burst-ing forth of the revolutionary idea and its subsequent develop-ments into a beacon to light the world.

The lesson of 1871 has benefited the workers of every land, enabling them to break with their old prejudices and come to a clearer and simpler understanding as to what their revolution is to be.

The next rising of communes will not be merely a "communal" movement. Those who still think that independent, local self-governing bodies must be first established and that these must try to make economic reforms within their own localities are being carried along by the further development of the popular spirit, at least in France. The communes of the next revolution will proclaim and establish their independence by direct socialist revolutionary action, abolishing private property. When the revolutionary situation ripens, which may happen any day, and governments are swept away by the people, when the middle-class camp, which only exists by state protection, is thus thrown into disorder, the insurgent people will not wait until some new government decrees, in its marvelous wisdom, a few economic reforms.

They will not wait to expropriate the holders of social capital by a decree which necessarily would remain a dead letter if not accomplished in fact by the workers themselves. They will take possession on the spot and establish their rights by utilizing it without delay. They will organize themselves in the workshops to continue the work, but what they will produce will be what is wanted by the masses, not what gives the highest profit to employers. They will exchange their hovels for healthy dwellings in the houses of the rich; they will organize themselves to turn to immediate use the wealth stored up in the towns; they will take

possession of it as if it had never been stolen from them by the middle class.

And when the industrial baron who has been levying black-mail upon the worker is once evicted, production will continue, throwing off the trammels which impede it, putting an end to the speculations which kill and the confusion which disorganizes it, transforming itself according to the necessities of the movement under the impulsion given to it by free labor. "Men never worked in France as they did in 1793, after the soil was snatched from the hands of the nobles, " says the historian Michelet. Never have men worked as they will on the day when labor becomes free and everything accomplished by the worker will be a source of well-being to the whole commune. An attempt has been made of late to establish a distinction between various sorts of social wealth, and the socialist party is divided upon the question. The present collectivist school, substituting a sort of dogmatic theory of collectivism for the collectivism of the old International (which was merely antiauthoritarian communism), has sought to establish a distinction between capital used for production and wealth supplying the necessities of life. Machinery, factories, raw material, means of communication, and the soil are on the one side, and dwellings, manufactured produce, clothing, commodities, on the other. The first are to be collective property, the second are designed, by the

professors of this school of socialism, to remain private property.

There has been an attempt to set up this distinction, but popular good sense has got the better of it; it has found it illusory and impossible to establish. It is vicious in theory and fails in practical life. The workers understand that the house which shelters us, the coal and gas we burn, the fuel consumed by the human machine to sustain life, the clothing necessary for existence, the book we read for instruction, even the enjoyments we get, are all so many component parts of our existence, are all as necessary to successful production and the progressive development of humanity as machines, manufactories, raw materials, and other means of working. The workers are arriving at the conclusion that to maintain private property for this sort of wealth would be to maintain inequality, oppression, exploitation, to paralyze beforehand the results of the partial expropriation. Leaping over the fence set up in their path by theoretical collectivism, they are marching straight for the simplest and most practical form of antiauthoritarian communism.

Now in their meetings the revolutionary workers are distinctly stating their right to all social wealth and the necessity of abolishing private property in articles of consumption as well as in those of reproduction: "On the day of the revolution, we shall seize upon all wealth

stored up in the towns and put it in common," say the speakers, and the audiences confirm the statements with their unanimous approval. "Let each take from the pile what he needs and be sure that in the warehouses of our towns there will be enough food to feed everyone until free production has made a fair start; in the shops of our towns there are enough clothes to dress everyone, kept there in reserve while outside there is nakedness and poverty. There are even enough luxuries for each to choose among them according to his liking."

Judging by what is said at commune commemoration meetings in France and elsewhere, the workers have made up their minds that the coming revolution will introduce anarchist communism and the free reorganization of production. These two points seem settled and in these respects the communes of the next revolution will not repeat the errors of their forerunners, who so generously shed their blood to clear the path for future progress.

There is, however, a third and no less important point upon which agreement is not yet reached, though it is not so very far off. This is the question of government.

As is well known, there are two sections of the Socialist party, completely divided by this point. "On the very day of the revolution," says the one, "we must constitute a

government to take possession of the supreme power. A strong, powerful, resolute government will make the revolution by decreeing this and that, and forcing all to obey its commands."

"A miserable delusion!" says the other. "Any central government, taking upon itself to rule a nation, must certainly be a mere hindrance to the revolution. It cannot fail to be made up of the most incongruous elements, and its very essence as a government is conservatism. It will do nothing but hold back the revolution in communes ready to go ahead, without being able to inspire backward communes with the breath of revolution. The same within a commune in revolt. Either the communal government will merely sanction accomplished facts and then it will be a useless and dangerous bit of machinery; or else it will wish to take the lead to make rules for what has yet to be freely worked out by the people themselves if it is to be really viable. It will apply theories where all society ought to work out fresh forms of common life with that creative force which springs up in the social organism when it breaks its chains and sees new and larger horizons opening before it. The men in power will obstruct this outburst, without doing any of the things they might themselves have done if they had remained among the people, working with them in the new organization instead of shutting themselves up in ministerial offices and wearing themselves out in idle debates. The

revolutionary government will be a hindrance and a danger; powerless for good, formidable for ill; therefore, what is the use of having it?"

However natural and just, this argument still runs counter to a great many prejudices stored up and accredited by those who have had an interest in maintaining the religion of government, side by side with the religions of property and of theology.

This prejudice, the last of the three, still exists and is a danger to the coming revolution, though it already shows signs of decay. "We will manage our business ourselves without waiting for the orders of a government, we will trample underfoot those who try to force us to accept them as priests, property owners or rulers," the workers have begun to say. We must hope that the anarchist party will continue to combat government worship vigorously, and never allow itself to be dragged or enticed into a struggle for power. We must hope that in the years which remain to us before the revolution the prejudice in favor of government may be so shaken that it will not be strong enough to draw off the people on a false route.

The communes of the next revolution will not only break down the state and substitute free federation for parliamentary rule; they will part with parliamentary rule within the commune itself. They will trust the free organization of food supply and production to

free groups of workers which will federate with like groups in other cities and villages not through the medium of a communal parliament but directly, to accomplish their aim.

They will be anarchist within the commune as they will be anarchist outside it and only thus will they avoid the horrors of defeat, the furies of reaction.

THE STATE - ITS HISTORIC ROLE **(1897)**

PETER KROPOTKIN

This text is from my
(<http://dwardmac.pitzer.edu/dward/index.html>) copy of
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Vanguard version.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

When Kropotkin was invited by Jean Grave, editor of *Les Temps Nouveaux*, to take part in a series of lectures to be held in the Milles Colonnnes Hall in Paris in March 1896, he chose two subjects: *The State: Its Historic Role* and *Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Its Ideal*. Bearing in mind that his greatest work, *Mutual Aid*, had been appearing as a series of articles in *The Nineteenth Century* from 1890-1896 his choice of subjects for these lectures is not surprising. Kropotkin explains in the French edition of his *Memoirs* "The research that I carried out in the course of familiarizing myself with the institutions of the barbarian period and those of the free cities of the Middle Ages, led me to carry out further interesting research on the role played by the State during the last three centuries, from the time of its last incarnation in Europe. In addition the study of institutions of mutual aid

in the different periods of civilization led me to enquire as to how the development of ideas of justice and morality came about in human society. I summarized my findings as two lectures: one on The State and Its Historic Role, and the other, in English, as Justice and Morality."

As it happens the lectures were never delivered. The day Kropotkin set off for Paris coincided with the decision by the heir to the Russian throne to visit Nice where he was to be welcomed by top representatives of the Government. At that time the Franco Russian military alliance was close and important to France, and the French authorities could not risk demonstrations in Paris at the Kropotkin lecture which was expected to attract between 4000 and 5000 people.

So when he disembarked from the Newhaven-Dieppe day boat Kropotkin was met by police officers who detained him. He was told that he had been expelled from France and would have to return by the first boat; in the event of any resistance he would be taken into 'administrative custody'. Apart from the fact that he did not get to Paris to deliver his lectures, the incident had its amusing side as well as confirming the esteem which he enjoyed even with his political enemies. He described the incident in more than one letter to his friends. Writing to James Guillaume in

1902 - six years after the incident - in response to his old friend's request for a detailed account, he describes the way he was approached by the police superintendent.

"He introduced himself as Monsieur Merdes ('of Spanish descent' he added every time he repeated his name). He read out the telegram from Bourgeois [the French Prime Minister] which more or less said 'If Kropotkin disembarks inform him that he is expelled, and that he must return with the first boat. If he resists take him into administrative custody'.

"`Very well', I replied, 'I shall send telegrams to Grave and my wife'. Which is what I did.

"As to my return; I had come on the day service, in second class; the sea was terrible - so rough that I, who had never suffered from sea-sickness, had to lie down (I was just convalescing after a bout of influenza). Very well, I shall return tomorrow morning', I said, 'with the day boat'.

"`No', answered Monsieur Merdes of Spanish origin and many grimaces. 'You must return immediately by the night boat - or I shall have to put you in prison. Your cell is already prepared.'

"Then from one o'clock till late at night they telegraphed all over France to find out whether I could spend the night at an hotel (with two policemen in the next room) or

whether I had to be taken to prison. The Deputy Prefect did not dare to take upon himself this terrible responsibility. Nor did the Prefect. They even telegraphed and telephoned to Nice.

"At ten o'clock Monsieur Merdes returned beaming: 'The Minister will allow you to spend the night in the hotel'.

"'The weather is fairly good', I said. 'So telegraph the Minister that I am returning by the night boat'. Which was what I did."

Kropotkin's brilliant, erudite, provocative lecture needs no formal introduction from a latter-day translator. And one assumes that the reader is prepared to make the necessary time adjustment and allowances for 'contemporary' references that are no longer contemporary but still interesting and relevant to our time; and for forecasts that have alas been proved over-optimistic; possibly too for Kropotkin's undue enthusiasm for an historic past the glories of which are sometimes given more emphasis than are its less attractive aspects.

Some readers may also question the value of detailed knowledge of the distant past for those who are seeking in the present, even modestly, to influence by direct action the future. For if we believe that Man makes history and not that Man is determined by

history then it should be sufficient to know what one wants to change in society and that there are also enough people prepared to act to bring about those changes, for the social revolution to take place.

When the above paragraph was written for the 1969 edition I asked: "There surely must be a flaw in this argument in view of the fact that in 1969 Marxist determinism is at its lowest ebb; the State is on the one hand discredited by the Left and the Right yet on the other assumes more and more functions (good and bad) partly because it is assumed by Left and Right that it is the State's function to do so! I think there is no flaw in the classical anarchist argument as expressed by Kropotkin in the concluding sections of this lecture, and the young 'anarcho-Maoists', and their 'anarcho-Che-Guevarist' contemporaries will probably learn more from Kropotkin's interpretation of social history than from the brothers Cohn-Bendit's *Obsolete Communism* (Deutsch, London 1968), however much one welcomes with open arms the advent of 'Danny le Rouge' and his generation."

How far away May 1968 now seems politically in a 1986 when from Thatcher to Reagan, from Chirac to Kohl, Western politics is dominated by a Rightist laissez faire philosophy which exalts 'individual initiative' and decries 'State interference'; when that pillar of the State - the Church - is now in many parts of the world in open rebellion against government; and not

all the Judiciary is as accommodating as at present in this country where it ignores police excesses and implements with enthusiasm the government's campaign to destroy Trades Unionism.

For Kropotkin "the State idea means something quite different from the idea of government" and those who think otherwise are "confusing" the two concepts. One eminent anarchist thinker who did just this was Malatesta who in his essay *Anarchy*, first published in 1891,* a few years before Kropotkin's *The State*, has this to say on the subject:

Anarchists, including this writer, have used the word State, and still do, to mean the sum total of the political, legislative, judiciary, military and financial institutions through which the management of their own affairs, the control over their personal behavior, the responsibility for their personal safety, are taken away from the people and entrusted to others who, by usurpation or delegation, are vested with the powers to make the laws for everything and everybody, and to oblige the people to observe them, if need be, by the use of collective force.

In this sense the word State means government, or to put it another way, it is the impersonal, abstract expression of that state of affairs, personified by government: and therefore the term abolition of the State,

Society without the State, etc., describe exactly the concept which anarchists seek to express of the destruction of all political order based on authority.

It would seem that Malatesta's definition corresponds more closely to the contemporary situation. This writer would even venture the opinion that effective government is no longer in the hands of the politicians but with the multi-nationals, the banks, insurance companies and pension funds (compare the power of the Chancellor of the Exchequer juggling with a few billion in his annual budget with that of the London market's daily turnover of 60 billion dollars!). And what of the recent Big Bang at the Stock Exchange and the technological explosion which pursues its ruthless path first to dehumanizing work and life and eventually to the annihilation of humanity. We may even live to see a privatized paramilitary police force controlled by this new 'State'. Perhaps...but we can only echo Kropotkin's final words to his lecture: "the choice lies with us!".

Colchester December 1986

Vernon Richards

* Anarchy by E. Malatesta in a new translation (Freedom Press, 1974).

SECTION I

In taking the State and its historic role as the subject for this study, I think I am satisfying a much felt need at the present time: that of examining in depth the very concept of the State, of studying its essence, its past role and the part it may be called upon to play in the future.

It is above all over the question of the State that socialists are divided. Two main currents can be discerned in the factions that exist among us which correspond to differences in temperament as well as in ways of thinking, but above all to the extent that one believes in the coming revolution.

There are those, on the one hand, who hope to achieve the social revolution through the State by preserving and even extending most of its powers to be used for the revolution. And there are those like ourselves who see the State, both in its present form, in its very essence, and in whatever guise it might appear, an obstacle to the social revolution, the greatest hindrance to the birth of a society based on equality and liberty, as well as the historic means designed to prevent this blossoming. The latter work to abolish the State and not to reform it.

It is clear that the division is a deep one. It corresponds with two divergent currents

which in our time are manifest in all philosophical thought, in literature as well as in action. And if the prevailing views on the State remain as obscure as they are today, there is no doubt whatsoever that when - and we hope, soon - communist ideas are subjected to practical application in the daily life of communities, it will be on the question of the State that the most stubborn struggles will be waged.

Having so often criticized the State as it is today, it behooves one to seek the reason for its emergence, to study in depth its past role, and to compare it with institutions that it has replaced.

Let us, first of all, be agreed as to what we wish to include by the term 'the State'.

There is, of course, the German school which takes pleasure in confusing State with Society. This confusion is to be found among the best German thinkers and many of the French who cannot visualize Society without a concentration of the State; and it is for this reason that anarchists are generally upbraided for wanting to destroy society' and of advocating a return to 'the permanent war of each against all'.

However to argue in this way is to overlook altogether the advances made in the domain of

history in the past thirty or so years; it is to overlook the fact that Man lived in Societies for thousands of years before the State had been heard of it is to forget that so far as Europe is concerned the State is of recent origin - it barely goes back to the sixteenth century; and finally, it is to ignore that the most glorious periods in Man's history are those in which civil liberties and communal life had not yet been destroyed by the State, and in which large numbers of people lived in communes and free federations.

The State is only one of the forms assumed by society in the course of history. Why then make no distinction between what is permanent and what is accidental?

On the other hand the State has also been confused with Government. Since there can be no State without government, it has sometimes been said that what one must aim at is the absence of government and not the abolition of the State.

However, it seems to me that State and government are two concepts of a different order. The State idea means something quite different from the idea of government. It not only includes the existence of a power situated above society, but also of a territorial concentration as well as the concentration in the hands of a few of many functions in the life of societies. It implies some new relationships between members of society which did not

exist before the formation of the State. A whole mechanism of legislation and of policing has to be developed in order to subject some classes to the domination of others.

This distinction, which at first sight might not be obvious, emerges especially when one studies the origins of the State.

Indeed, there is only one way of really understanding the State, and that is to study its historic development, and this is what we shall try to do.

The Roman Empire was a State in the real sense of the word. To this day it remains the legist's ideal. Its organs covered a vast domain with a tight network. Everything gravitated towards Rome: economic and military life, wealth, education, nay, even religion. From Rome came the laws, the magistrates, the legions to defend the territory, the prefects and the gods. The whole life of the Empire went back to the Senate - later to the Caesar, the all powerful, omniscient, god of the Empire. Every province, every district had its Capitol in miniature, its small portion of Roman sovereignty to govern every aspect of daily life. A single law, that imposed by Rome, dominated that Empire which did not represent a confederation of fellow citizens but was simply a herd of subjects.

Even now, the legist and the authoritarian still admire the unity of that Empire, the unitarian

spirit of its laws and, as they put it, the beauty and harmony of that organization.

But the disintegration from within, hastened by the barbarian invasion; the extinction of local life, which could no longer resist the attacks from outside on the one hand nor the canker spreading from the center on the other; the domination by the rich who had appropriated the land to themselves and the misery of those who cultivated it - all these causes reduced the Empire to a shambles, and on these ruins a new civilization developed which is now ours.

So, if we leave aside the civilization of antiquity, and concentrate our attention on the origin and developments of this young barbarian civilization, right up to the times when, in its turn, it gave birth to our modern States, we will be able to capture the essence of the State better than had we directed our studies to the Roman Empire, or to that of Alexander of Macedonia, or again the despotic monarchies of the East.

In using, for instance, these powerful barbarian overthrowers of the Roman Empire as our point of departure, we will be able to retrace the evolution of our whole civilization, from its beginnings and up to its Statal phase.

SECTION II

Most philosophers of the eighteenth century had very elementary ideas on the origin of societies.

According to them, in the beginning Mankind lived in small isolated families, and perpetual warfare between them was the normal state of affairs. But, one day, realizing at last the disadvantages of their endless struggles, men decided to socialize. A social contract was concluded among the scattered families who willingly submitted themselves to an authority which - need I say? - became the starting-point as well as the initiator of all progress. And does one need to add, since we have been told as much at school, that our present governments have so far remained in their noble role as the salt of the earth, the pacifiers and civilizers of the human race?

This idea dominated the eighteenth century, a period in which very little was known about the origins of Man; and one must add that in the hands of the Encyclopaedists and of Rousseau, the idea of the 'social contract' became a weapon with which to fight the divine rights of kings. Nevertheless, in spite of the services it may have rendered in the past, this theory must be seen to be false.

The fact is that all animals, with the exception of some carnivores and birds of prey, and

some species which are becoming extinct, live in societies. In the struggle for life, it is the gregarious species which have an advantage over those that are not. In every animal classification they are at the top of the ladder and there cannot be the slightest doubt that the first human beings with human attributes were already living in societies.

Man did not create society; society existed before Man.

We now also know - and it has been convincingly demonstrated by anthropology - that the point of departure for mankind was not the family but the clan, the tribe. The patriarchal family as we know it, or as it is depicted in Hebrew traditions, did not appear until very much later man spent tens of thousands of years in the clan or tribal phase - let us call it the primitive tribe or, if you wish, the savage tribe - and during this time man had already developed a whole series of institutions, habits and customs much earlier than the institutions of the patriarchal family.

In these tribes, the separate family no more existed than it exists among so many other sociable mammals. Any division within the tribe was mainly between generations; and from a far distant age, going right back to the dawn of the human race, limitations had been imposed to prevent sexual relations between the different generations, which however were allowed between those of the same generation.

One can still find traces of that period in some contemporary tribes as well as in the language, customs and superstitions of peoples of a much higher culture.

Hunting and food-gathering were engaged in by the whole tribe in common, and once their hunger was satisfied, they gave themselves up with passion to their dramatized dances. To this day we still find tribes who are very close to this primitive phase living on the periphery of the large continents, or in the vicinity of mountainous regions, in the least accessible parts of the world.

The accumulation of private property could not then take place there, since anything that had been the personal possession of a member of the tribe was destroyed or burned where his body was buried. This is still done, in England too, by the Gypsies, and funeral rites of 'civilized' people still bear the imprint of this custom: thus the Chinese burn paper models of the dead person's possessions, and at the military leader's funeral his horse, his sword and decorations accompany him as far as his grave. The meaning of the institution has been lost, but the form has survived.

Far from expressing contempt for human life, those primitive people hated murder and blood. To spill blood was considered such a grave matter, that every drop spilled - not only human blood but also that of some animals -

required that the aggressor should lose an equal amount of his own blood.

Furthermore, murder within the tribe is something quite unknown; for instance among the Inuits or Eskimos - those survivors of the Stone Age who inhabit the Arctic regions - or among the Aleutians, etc., one definitely knows that there has not been a single murder within the tribe for fifty, sixty or more years.

But when tribes of different origin, color and language met in the course of their migrations, it often ended in war. It is true that even then men were seeking to make these encounters more pacific. Tradition, as Maine, Post and E. Nys have so well demonstrated, was already developing the germs of what in due course became International Law. For instance, a village could not be attacked without warning the inhabitants. Never would anyone dare to kill on the path used by women to reach the spring. And often to make peace it was necessary to balance the numbers of men killed on both sides.

However, all these precautions and many others besides were not enough: solidarity did not extend beyond the confines of the clan or tribe; quarrels arose between people of different clans and tribes, which could end in violence and even murder.

From that period a general law began to be developed between the clans and tribes. Your

members have wounded or killed one of ours; we have a right therefore to kill one of you or to inflict a similar wound on one of you, and it did not matter who, since the tribe was always responsible for the individual acts of its members.

The well-known biblical verses: "Blood for blood, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a wound for a wound, a life for a life" - but no more! As Koenigswarter put it so well - owe their origin to them. It was their concept of justice...and we have no reason to feel superior since the principle of a life for a life' which prevails in our codes is only one of its many survivals.

It is clear that a whole series of institutions (and many others I shall not mention) as well as a complete code of tribal morality, were already developed during this primitive phase. And this nucleus of sociable customs was kept alive by usage, custom and tradition only. There was no authority with which to impose it.

There can be no doubt that primitive society had temporary leaders. The sorcerer, the rainmaker - the learned men of that age - sought to profit from what they knew about nature in order to dominate their fellow beings. Similarly, he who could more easily memorize the proverbs and songs in which all tradition was embodied became influential. At popular festivals he would recite these

proverbs and songs in which were incorporated the decisions that had been taken on such-and-such an occasion by the people's assembly in such-and-such a connection. In many a small tribe this is still done. And dating from that age, these 'educated' members sought to ensure a dominant role for themselves by communicating their knowledge only to the chosen few, to the initiates. All religions, and even the arts and all trades have begun with 'mysteries', and modern research demonstrates the important role that secret societies of the initiates play to maintain some traditional practices in primitive clans. Already the germs of authority are present there.

It goes without saying that the courageous, the daring and, above all, the prudent, also became the temporary leaders in the struggles with other tribes or during migrations. But there was no alliance between the bearer of the 'law' (the one who knew by heart the tradition and past decisions), the military chief and the sorcerer and the State was no more part of these tribes than it is of the society of bees or ants, or of our contemporaries the Patagonians and the Eskimos.

Nevertheless that phase lasted for many thousands of years, and the barbarians who overran the Roman Empire had also gone through this phase and were only just emerging from it.

In the early centuries of our era there were widespread migrations of the tribes and confederations of tribes that inhabited Central and Northern Asia. Waves of small tribes driven by more or less civilized peoples who had come down from the high table lands of Asia - they themselves had probably been driven away by the rapid desiccation of these plateaus [1] - spread all over Europe, each driving the other and being assimilated in their drive towards the West.

In the course of these migrations, in which so many tribes of different origins became assimilated, the primitive tribe which still existed among most of the savage inhabitants of Europe could not avoid disintegration. The tribe was based on a common origin and the cult of common ancestors; but to which common origin could these agglomerations of people appeal when they emerged from the confusion of migrations, drives, inter-tribal wars, during which here and there one could already observe the emergence of the paternal family - the nucleus formed by the exclusive possession by some of women won or carried off from neighboring tribes?

The old ties were broken, and to avoid disruption (which, in fact, did occur for many tribes, which disappeared for ever) new links had to be forged. And they were established through the communal possession of the land - of the territory on which each agglomeration had finally settled. [2]

The possession in common of a particular area - of this small valley or those hills - became the basis for a new understanding. The ancestral gods lost all meaning; so then local gods, of that small valley or this river or that forest, gave their religious sanction to the new agglomerations by replacing the gods of the original tribe. Later Christianity, always willing to adjust to pagan survivals, made them into local saints.

Henceforth, the village community consisting entirely or partly of individual families - all united, however, by the possession in common of the land - became the essential link for centuries to come.

Over vast areas of Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa it still survives. The barbarians - Scandinavians, Germans, Slavs, etc. - who destroyed the Roman Empire lived under such an organization. And by studying the codes of the barbarians of that period, as well as the confederations of village communities that exist today among the Kabyles, the Mongols, the Hindus, the Africans, etc., it has been possible to reconstruct in its entirety that form of society which was the starting point of our present civilization as it is today.

Let us therefore have a look at this institution.

[1] The reasons which lead me to this hypothesis are put forward in a paper,

Desiccation of Eurasia, compiled for the Research Department of the Geographical Society of London, and published in its Geographical Journal for June 1904.

[2] Readers interested in this subject as well as in that of the communal phases and of the free cities, will find more detailed information and source references in my book Mutual Aid.

SECTION III

The village community consisted then, as it still does, of individual families. But all the families of the same village owned the land in common. They considered it as their common heritage and shared it out among themselves on the basis of the size of each family - their needs and their potential. Hundreds of millions of human beings still live in this way in Eastern Europe, India, Java, etc. It is the same kind of system that has been established in our time by Russian peasants, freely in Siberia, as soon as the State gave them a chance to occupy the vast Siberian territory in their own way.

Today the cultivation of the land in a village community is carried out by each individual household independently. Since all the arable land is shared out between the families (and further shared out when necessary) each cultivates its field as best it can. But originally, the land was also worked in common, and this custom is still carried on in many places - at least on a part of the land. As to the clearing of woodland and the thinning of forests, the construction of bridges, the building of small forts and turrets, for use as places of safety in the event of invasion - all these activities were carried out on a communal basis, just as hundreds of millions of peasants still do where the village commune has held out against the encroachments of the State. But 'consumption'

- to use a modern term - was already operating on a family basis, each family having its cattle, its kitchen garden and stores. The means both for hoarding and for handing down goods and chattels accumulated through inheritance had already been introduced.

In all its affairs the village commune was sovereign. Local custom was law and the plenary assembly of all the heads of family, men and women, was the judge, the only judge, in civil and criminal matters. When an inhabitant had lodged a complaint against another and stuck his knife in the ground at the place where the commune normally assembled, the commune had to 'find the sentence' according to local custom once the fact of an offense had been established by the juries of the two parties in litigation.

Were I to recount all the interesting aspects of this phase, I would not have the space in which to do so. I must therefore refer the reader to Mutual Aid. Suffice it to mention here that all the institutions which States were to seize later for the benefit of minorities, that all notions of law that exist in our codes (which have been mutilated in favor of minorities) and all forms of judicial procedure, in so far as they offer guarantees to the individual, had their beginnings in the village commune. So when we imagine that we have made great advances in introducing for instance, the jury, all we have done is to return to the institution of the so-called 'barbarians' after having changed it

to the advantage of the ruling classes. Roman law was simply grafted to customary law.

The sense of national unity was developing at the same time through large free federations of village communes.

The village commune, being based on the possession in common and very often in the cultivation in common of the land; and being sovereign both as judge and legislator of customary law, satisfied most of the needs of the social being.

But not all its needs: there were still others that had to be satisfied. Now, the spirit of the times was not to appeal to a government as soon as a new need was making itself felt. On the contrary the individuals themselves would take the initiative to come together, to join forces, and to federate; to create an entente, large or small, numerous or restricted, which was in keeping with the new need. And society then was literally covered, as if by a network, of sworn brotherhoods, of guilds for mutual aid, of 'conjurations', in the village as well as outside it, in the federation.

We may observe this phase and spirit at work even today, among many barbarian federations, which have remained outside the modern States copied on the Roman or rather Byzantine model.

Thus, to take one example among many, the Kabyles have maintained their village community, with the characteristics I have just mentioned: land in common, communal tribunals, etc. But man feels the need for action beyond the narrow confines of his hamlet. Some rove the world seeking adventure as pedlars. Others take up some kind of trade - or 'art'. And those pedlars and those artisans join together in 'fraternities', even when they belong to different villages, tribes or confederations. Union is needed for mutual succor on voyages to distant lands, for the mutual exchange of the mysteries of one's trade, and so they join forces. They swear brotherhood and practice it in a way that makes a deep impression on Europeans; it is a real brotherhood and not just empty words.

Furthermore, misfortune can overtake anyone. Who knows but that tomorrow in a brawl a normally gentle and quiet man may exceed the established limits of decorum and sociability? Who knows whether he might resort to blows and inflict wounds? It will be necessary to pay heavy compensation to the offended or wounded party; it will be necessary to plead one's cause before the village assembly, and to reconstruct the facts, on the testimony of six, ten or twelve 'sworn brothers'. All the more reason to enter a fraternity.

Besides, man feels the need to meddle in politics, to engage in intrigue perhaps, or to propagate a particular moral opinion or a

particular custom. Finally, external peace has to be safeguarded; alliances with other tribes to be concluded, federations to be constituted far and wide; elements of intertribal law to be spread abroad. Well then, to gratify all these needs of an emotional or intellectual nature, the Kabyles, the Mongols, the Malays, do not appeal to a government; they haven't one. Being men of customary law, and individual initiative, they have not been perverted from acting for themselves by the corrupting force of government and Church. They unite spontaneously. They form sworn brotherhoods, political and religious associations, craft associations - guilds as they were called in the Middle Ages, and cofs as they are called today by the Kabyles. And these cofs extend beyond the boundaries of the hamlet; they extend far and wide into the desert and to foreign cities; and brotherhood is practiced in these associations. To refuse help to a member of one's cof - even at the risk of losing all one's possessions and one's life - is to commit an act of treason to the `brotherhood'; it is to be treated as one's `brother's' murderer.

What we find today among the Kabyles, Mongols, Malays, etc., was the very essence of life of the barbarians in Europe from the fifth to the twelfth and even until the fifteenth century. Under the name of guilds, friendships, brotherhoods, etc., associations abounded for mutual defense, to avenge affronts suffered by some members of the union and to express solidarity, to replace the

`eye for an eye' vengeance by compensation, followed by the acceptance of the aggressor in the brotherhood; for the exercise of trades, for aid in case of illness, for defense of the territory; to prevent encroachments of a nascent authority; for commerce, for the practice of 'good neighborliness'; for propaganda - in a word for all that Europeans, educated by the Rome of the Caesars and the Popes, nowadays expect from the State. It is even very doubtful whether there was a single man in that period, free man or serf, apart from those who had been banned by their own brotherhoods, who did not belong to a brotherhood or some guild, as well as to his commune.

The Scandinavian Sagas extol their achievements; the devotion of sworn brothers is the theme of the most beautiful poems. Of course, the Church and nascent kings, representatives of the Byzantine (or Roman) law which reappeared, hurl their excommunications and their rules and regulations at the brotherhood, but fortunately they remained a dead letter.

The whole history of the epoch loses its meaning and is quite incomprehensible if one does not take those brotherhoods into consideration, these unions of brothers and sisters, which sprang up everywhere to deal with the many needs in the economic and personal lives of the people.

In order to appreciate the immense progress achieved by this double institution of village communities and freely sworn brotherhoods - outside any Roman Catholic or Statist influence - take for instance Europe as it was at the time of the barbarian invasion, and compare it with what it became in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The untamed forest is conquered and colonized; villages cover the country and are surrounded by fields and hedges and protected by small forts interlinked by paths crossing forests and the marshes.

In these villages one finds the seeds of industrial arts and discovers a whole network of institutions for maintaining internal and external peace. In the event of murder or woundings the villagers no longer seek as in the tribe, to eliminate or to inflict an equivalent wound on the aggressor, or even one of his relatives or some of his fellow villagers. Rather is it the brigand-lords who still adhere to that principle (hence their wars without end), whereas among villagers compensation, fixed by arbiters, becomes the rule after which peace is re-established and the aggressor is often, if not always, adopted by the family who has been wronged by his aggression.

Arbitration for all disputes becomes a deeply rooted institution in daily use - in spite of and against the bishops and the nascent kinglets who would wish every difference should be

laid before them, or their agents, in order to benefit from the fred - the fine formerly levied by the village on violators of the peace when they brought their dispute before them, and which the kings and bishops now appropriate.

And finally hundreds of villages are already united in powerful federations, sworn to internal peace, who look upon their territory as a common heritage and are united for mutual protection. These were the seeds of European nations. And to this day one can still study those federations in operation among the Mongol, the Turko-Finnish and Malayan tribes.

Meanwhile black clouds are gathering on the horizon. Other unions - of dominant minorities - are also established, which seek slowly to make these free men into serfs, into subjects. Rome is dead, but its tradition is reborn, and the Christian church, haunted by the visions of Eastern theocracies, gives its powerful support to the new powers that seek to establish themselves.

Far from being the bloodthirsty beast he was made out to be in order to justify the need to dominate him, Man has always preferred peace and quiet. Quarrelsome rather than fierce, he prefers his cattle, the land, and his hut to soldiering. For this reason, no sooner had the great migrations of barbarians slowed down, no sooner had the hordes and the tribes fortified themselves more or less in their

respective territories, than we see that defense of the territory against new waves of emigrants is entrusted to someone who engages a small band of adventurers - hardened warriors or brigands - to follow him, while the overwhelming majority engages in rearing cattle, in working the land. And that defender soon begins to accumulate riches; he gives horses and iron (then very expensive) to the miserable cultivator who has neither horse nor plough, and reduces him to servitude. He also begins to lay down the bases for military power.

And at the same time, little by little, the tradition that makes the law is being forgotten by the majority. In each village only a few old folk can remember the verses and songs containing the 'precedents' on which customary law is based, and on festive occasions the repeat these before the community. And slowly, certain families make it their speciality, transmitted from father to son, of remembering these songs and verses, of preserving the purity of the law. Villagers would go to them to adjudicate on complicated disputes, especially when two confederations could not agree to accept the decisions of the arbiters chosen from among themselves.

Princely and royal authority is already germinating in these families, and the more I study the institutions of that period the more do I see that customary law did much more to create that authority than did the power of the

sword. Man allowed himself to be enslaved much more by his desire to 'punish' the aggressor according to the law than by direct military conquest.

And gradually the first 'concentration of powers', the first mutual assurance for domination - by judge and military leader - is made against the village community. A single man assumes these two functions. He surrounds himself with armed men to carry out the judicial decisions; he fortifies himself in his turret; he accumulates for his family the riches of the time - bread, cattle iron - and slowly imposes his domination over the peasant in the vicinity.

The learned man of the period, that is the sorcerer or the priest, soon gave him his support either to share his power or, by adding force to the knowledge of customary law to his powers as a feared magician, the priest takes it over himself. From which stems the temporal authority of the bishops in the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries.

I would need a series of lectures rather than a chapter to deal with this subject which is so full of new lessons, and to recount how free men gradually became serfs, forced to work for the lord of the manor, temporal or clerical; of how authority was built up over the villages and boroughs in a tentative, groping manner;

of how the peasants leagued together, rebelled, struggled to oppose this growing domination; of how they perished in those attacks against the thick walls of the castle and against the men clad in iron defending it.

It will be enough for me to say that round about the tenth and eleventh centuries the whole of Europe appeared to be moving towards the constitution of those barbarian kingdoms, similar to the ones found today in the heart of Africa, or those of theocracies one knows about from Oriental history. This could not happen in a day; but the seeds of those petty royalties and for those petty theocracies were already there and were increasingly manifesting themselves.

Fortunately the 'barbarian' spirit - Scandinavian, Saxon, Celt, German Slav - which for seven or eight centuries had incited men to seek the satisfaction of their needs through individual initiative and through free agreement between the brotherhoods and guilds - fortunately that spirit persisted in the villages and boroughs. The barbarians allowed themselves to be enslaved, they worked for the master, but their feeling for free action and free agreement had not yet been broken down. Their brotherhoods were more alive than ever, and the crusades had only succeeded in arousing and developing them in the West.

And so the revolution of the urban communities, resulting from the union of the

village community and the sworn brotherhood of the artisans and the merchant - which had been prepared long since by the federal mood of the period - exploded in the eleventh and twelfth centuries with striking effect in Europe. It had already started in the Italian communities in the tenth century.

This revolution, which most university historians prefer to ignore, or to underestimate, saved Europe from the disaster which threatened it. It arrested the development of theocratic and despotic kingdoms in which our civilization might well have foundered, after a few centuries of pompous splendor, just as did the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Assyria and Babylon. It opened the way for a new way of life: that of the free communes.

SECTION IV

It is easy to understand why modern historians, trained in the Roman way of thinking and seeking to associate all institutions with Rome, find it so difficult to appreciate the communalist movement that existed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This movement with its virile affirmation of the individual, and which succeeded in creating a society through the free federation of men, of villages and of towns, was the complete negation of the unitarian, centralizing Roman outlook with which history is explained in our university curricula. Nor is it linked to any historic personality, or to any central institution.

It is a natural development, belonging, just as did the tribe and the village community, to a certain phase in human evolution, and not to any particular nation or region. This is the reason why academic science cannot be sensitive to its spirit and why the Augustin Thierry's and the Sismond's, historians who really had understood the mood of the period, have not had followers in France, where Luchaire is still the only one to have taken up - more or less - the tradition of the great historian of the Merovingian and Communalist periods. It further explains why, in England and Germany, research into this period as well as an appreciation of its motivating forces, are of very recent origin.

The commune of the Middle Ages, the free city, owes its origin on the one hand to the village community, and on the other, to those thousands of brotherhoods and guilds which were coming to life in that period independently of the territorial union. As a federation between these two kinds of unions, it was able to assert itself under the protection of its fortified ramparts and turrets.

In many regions it many regions it was a peaceful development. Elsewhere - and this applied in general to Western Europe - it was the result of a revolution. As soon as the inhabitants of a particular borough felt themselves to be sufficiently protected by their walls, they made a 'conjunction'. They mutually swore an oath to drop all pending matters concerning slander, violence or wounding, and undertook, so far as disputes that might arise in the future, never again to have recourse to any judge other than the syndics which they themselves would nominate. In every good-neighborly or art guild, in every sworn brotherhood, it had been normal practice for a long time. In every village community, such as had been the way of life in the past, before the bishop and the petty king had managed to introduce, and later impose on it, its judge.

Now, the hamlets and parishes which made up the borough, as well as the guilds and brotherhoods which developed within it,

looked upon themselves as a single amitas, nominated their judges and swore permanent union between all those groups.

A charter was soon drawn up and accepted. If need be, someone would be sent off to copy the charter of some neighboring small community (we know of hundreds of such charters) and the community was set up. The bishop or the prince, who had been until then the judge in the community, and often more or less its master, could in the circumstances only recognize the fait accompli - or oppose the new conjuration by force of arms. Often the king - that is the prince who sought to be a cut above the other princes and whose coffers were always empty - would 'grant' the charter for ready cash. Thus he refrained from imposing his judge on the community, while at the same time gaining prestige in the eyes of the other feudal lords. But this was by no means the rule; hundreds of communes remained active with no other authority than their goodwill, their ramparts and their lances.

In the course of a hundred years, this movement spread in an impressively harmonious way throughout Europe - by imitation, to be sure - covering Scotland, France, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, Germany, Italy, Poland and Russia. And when we now compare the Charters and the internal organization of all these communities we are struck by the virtual uniformity of these Charters and the organization that grew in the

shadow of these 'social contracts'. What a striking lesson for the Romanists and the Hegelians for whom servitude before the law is the only means of achieving conformity in institutions!

From the Atlantic to the middle course of the Volga, and from Norway to Sicily, Europe was being covered with such communities - some becoming populated cities such as Florence, Venice, Amiens, Nuremberg or Novgorod, others remaining struggling villages of a hundred or as few as some twenty families, but nevertheless treated as equals by their more prosperous sisters.

As organisms bubbling with life, communities obviously developed in different ways. Geographical location, the nature of external commerce, and resistance from outside to overcome all gave each community its own history. But for all of them the basic principle was the same. The same friendship (amitas) of the village communities and the guilds associated within the precincts whether it was Pskov in Russia and Bruges in Flanders, a village of three hundred inhabitants in Scotland or prosperous Venice with its islands, a village in the North of France or one in Poland, or even Florence la Belle. They all represent the same amitas; the same friendship of the village communes and guilds, united behind the walled precincts. Their constitution, in its general characteristics, is the same.

Generally the walls of the town grew longer and thicker as the population grew and were flanked by towers which grew taller and taller, and were each raised by this or that district, or guild, and consequently displayed individual characteristics - the town was divided into four, five or six sections or sectors, which radiated from the citadel or the cathedral towards the city ramparts. Each of these sectors was inhabited mainly by an 'art' or trade whereas the new trades - the 'young arts' - occupied the suburbs which in due course were enclosed by a new fortified wall.

The street, or the parish represented the territorial unit, corresponding to the earlier village community. Each street or parish had its popular assembly, its forum, its popular tribunal, its priest, its militia, its banner and often its seal, the symbol of its sovereignty. Though federated with other streets it nevertheless maintained its independence.

The professional unit which often was more or less identified with the district or with the sector, was the guild - the trade union. The latter also had its saints, its assembly, its forum and its judges. It had its funds, its landed property, its militia and its banner. It also had its seal, symbol of its sovereignty. In the event of war, its militia joined, assuming it was considered expedient, with the other guilds and planted its own banner alongside the large banner (carrosse) of the city.

Thus the city was the union of the districts, streets, parishes and guilds, and had its plenary assembly in the grand forum, its large belfry, its elected judges and its banner to rally the militias of the guilds and districts. It dealt with other cities as sovereign, federated with whomever it wished, concluded alliances nationally or even outside the national territory. Thus the Cinque ports around Dover were federated with French and Dutch ports across the Channel; the Russian Novgorod was the ally of the Germano-Scandinavian Hansa, and so on. In its external relations each city possessed all the attributes of the modern State. From that period onwards what came to be known later as International Law was formed by free contracts and subject to sanction by public opinion in all the cities, just as later it was to be more often violated than respected by the States.

On how many occasions would a particular city, unable 'to find the sentence' in a particularly complicated case, send someone to 'seek the sentence' in a neighboring city! How often was the prevailing spirit of that period - arbitration, rather than the judge's authority - demonstrated with two communes taking a third one as arbitrator!

The trades also acted in this way. Their commercial and craft relations extended beyond the city, and their agreements were made without taking into account nationality.

And when in our ignorance we boast of our international workers' congresses, we forget that by the fifteenth century international congresses of trades and even apprentices were already being held.

Lastly, the city either defended itself against aggressors and itself waged fierce war against the feudal lords in the neighborhood, naming each year one or two military commanders for its militias; or it accepted a 'military defender' - a prince or a duke which it selected for one year and dismissed at will. For the maintenance of his soldiers, he would be given the receipts from judicial fines; but he was forbidden to interfere in the affairs of the city.

Or if the city were too weak to free itself from its neighbors the feudal vultures, it kept as its more or less permanent military defender, the bishop, or the prince of a particular family - Guelf or Ghibelline in Italy, the Rurik family in Russia, or the Olgerds in Lithuania - but was jealously vigilant in preventing the authority of the bishop or the prince extending beyond the men encamped in the castle. They were even forbidden to enter the city without permission. To this day the King of England cannot enter the City of London without the permission of the Lord Mayor.

The economic life of the cities in the Middle Ages would deserve to be recounted in detail. The interested reader is referred to what I have written on the subject in Mutual Aid in

which I rely on a vast body of up-to-date historic research on the subject. Here it must suffice simply to note that internal commerce was dealt with entirely by the guilds - not by individual artisans - prices being established by mutual agreement. Furthermore, at the beginning of that period external commerce was dealt with exclusively by the city. It was only later that it became the monopoly of the Merchants' Guild, and later still of individual merchants. Furthermore, nobody worked on Sundays, nor on Saturday afternoons (bath day). The provisioning of the principal consumer goods was always handled by the city, and this custom was preserved for corn in some Swiss towns until the middle of the nineteenth century. In short there is a massive and varied documentation to show that mankind has not known, either before or since, a period of relative well-being assured to everybody as existed in the cities of the Middle Ages. The present poverty, insecurity, and physical exploitation of labour were then unknown.

SECTION V

With these elements - liberty, organization from the simple to the complex, production and exchange by the Trades (guilds), foreign trade handled by the whole city and not by individuals, and the purchase of provisions by the city for resale to the citizens at cost price - with such elements, the towns of the Middle Ages for the first two centuries of their free existences became centers of well-being for all the inhabitants, centers of wealth and culture, such as we have not seen since.

One has but to consult the documents which made it possible to compare the rates at which work was remunerated and the cost of provisions - Rogers has done this for England and a great number of German writers for Germany - to learn that the labour of an artisan and even of a simple day-laborer was paid at a rate not attained in our time, not even by the elite among workers. The account books of colleges of the University of Oxford (which cover seven centuries beginning at the twelfth) and of some English landed estates, as well as those of a large number of German and Swiss towns, are there to bear witness.

If one also considers the artistic finish and amount of decorative work the craftsman of that period put into not only the objects of art he produced, but also into the simplest of household utensils - a railing, a candlestick, a

piece of pottery - one realists that he did not know what it meant to be hurried in his work, or overworked as is the case in our time; that he could forge, sculpt, weave, or embroider as only a very small number of worker-artists among us can manage nowadays.

Finally, if one runs through the list of donations made to the churches and the communal houses of the parish, the guild or the city, both in works of art - decorative panels, sculptures, wrought-iron and cast metal - and in money, one realists the degree of well-being attained by those cities; one also has an insight into the spirit of research and invention which manifested itself and of the breath of freedom which inspired their works, the feeling of brotherly solidarity that grew up in those guilds in which men of the same trade were united, not simply for commercial and technical reasons, but by bonds of sociability and brotherhood. Was it not in fact the rule of the guild that two brothers should sit at the bedside of each sick brother - a custom which certainly. required devotion in those times of contagious diseases and the plague - and to follow him as far as the grave, and then look after his widow and children?

Abject poverty, misery, uncertainty of the morrow for the majority, and the isolation of poverty, which are the characteristics of our modern cities, were quite unknown in those 'free oases, which emerged in the twelfth century amidst the feudal jungle'.

In those cities, sheltered by their conquered liberties, inspired by the spirit of free agreement and of free initiative, a whole new civilization grew up and flourished in a way unparalleled to this day.

All modern industry comes to us from these cities. In three centuries, industries and the arts attained such perfection that our century has only been able to surpass them in speed of production, but rarely in quality, and very rarely in the intrinsic beauty of the product. All the arts we seek in vain to revive now - the beauty of a Raphael, the strength and boldness of a Michelangelo, the art and science of a Leonardo da Vinci, the poetry and language of a Dante, and not least, the architecture to which we owe the cathedrals of Laon, Rheims, Cologne, Pisa, Florence - as Victor Hugo so well put it "*le peuple en fut le maçon*" (they were built by the people) - the treasures of sheer beauty of Florence and Venice, the town halls of Bremen and Prague, the towers of Nuremberg and Pisa, and so on *ad infinitum*, all was the product of that age.

Do you wish to measure the progress of that civilization at a glance? Then compare the dome of St Mark in Venice with the rustic arch of the Normans; the paintings of Raphael with the embroidery of the Bayeux Tapestries; instruments of mathematic; and physics, and

the clocks of Nuremberg with the hour-glasses of the preceding centuries; the rich language of a Dante with his uncouth Latin of the tenth century. A new world was born between the two!

With the exception of that other glorious period - once more of free cities - of ancient Greece, never had humanity made such; giant step forward. Never, in the space of two or three centuries, had Man undergone such far-reaching changes, nor so extended his power over the forces of Nature.

You are perhaps thinking of the civilization and progress of our century which comes in for so much boasting? But in each of its manifestations it is only the child of the civilization that grew up with the free communes. All the great discoveries made by modern science - the compass, the clock, the watch, printing, maritime discoveries, gunpowder, the laws of gravitation, atmospheric pressure of which the steam engine is a development, the rudiments of chemistry, the scientific method already outlined by Roger Bacon and applied in Italian universities - where do all these originate if not in the free cities, in the civilization which was developed under the protection of communal liberties?

It will perhaps be pointed out that I am forgetting the internal conflicts, the domestic struggles, with which the history of these

communes is filled, the street riots, the bitter wars waged against the lords, the insurrection of the 'young arts' against the 'old arts', the blood spilled in those struggles and in the reprisals that followed.

No, in fact I forget nothing. But like Leo and Botta - the two historians of medieval Italy - and Sismondi, Ferrari, Gino Capponi and so many others, I see that those struggles were the very guarantee of a free life in the free city. I perceive a renewal, a new impetus towards progress after each of those struggles. After having recounted in detail these struggles and conflicts, and having measured also the greatness of the progress achieved while blood was being shed in the streets; well-being assured for all the inhabitants, and civilization renewed - Leo and Botta concluded with this idea which is so just and of which I am frequently reminded. I would like to see it engraved in the minds of every modern revolutionary: "A commune - they said - does not represent the picture of a moral whole, does not appear universal in its manner of being, as the human mind itself, except when it has admitted conflict, opposition."

Yes, conflict, freely debated, without an outside force, the State, adding its immense weight to the balance in favor of one of the forces engaged in the struggle.

I believe, with these two writers, that often "more harm has been done by imposing peace,

because one linked together opposites in seeking to create a general political order and sacrificed individualities and small organisms, in order to absorb them in a vast colorless and lifeless whole.

It is for this reason that the communes - so long as they did not themselves seek to become States and to impose around them "submission in a vast colorless and lifeless whole" - for this reason they grew and gained a new lease of life from each struggle, and blossomed to the clatter of swords in the streets; whereas two centuries later that same civilization collapsed in the wake of wars fathered by the States.

In the commune, the struggle was for the conquest and defence of the liberty of the individual, for the federative principle for the right to unite and to act; whereas the States' wars had as their objective the destruction of these liberties, the submission of the individual, the annihilation of the free contract, and the uniting of men in a universal slavery to king, judge and priest - to the State.

Therein lies all the difference. There are struggles and conflicts which are destructive. And there are others which drive humanity forwards.

SECTION VI

In the course of the sixteenth century, the modern barbarians were to destroy all that civilization of the cities of the Middle Ages. These barbarians did not succeed in annihilating it, but in halting its progress at least two or three centuries. They launched it in a different direction, in which humanity is struggling at this moment without knowing how to escape.

They subjected the individual. They deprived him of all his liberties, they expected him to forget all his unions based on free argument and free initiative. Their aim was to level the whole of society to a common submission to the master. They destroyed all ties between men, declaring that the State and the Church alone, must henceforth create union between their subjects; that the Church and the State alone have the task of watching over the industrial, commercial, judicial, artistic, emotional interests, for which men of the twelfth century were accustomed to unite directly.

And who are these barbarians? It is the State: the Triple Alliance, finally constituted, of the military chief, the Roman judge and the priest - the three constituting a mutual assurance for domination - the three, united in one power which will command in the name of the interests of society - and will crush that same society.

One naturally asks oneself, how were these new barbarians able to overcome the communes, hitherto so powerful? Where did they find the strength for conquest?

In the first place they found it in the village. Just as the communes of Ancient Greece proved unable to abolish slavery, and for that reason perished - so the communes of the Middle Ages failed to free the peasant from serfdom at the same time as the townsman.

It is true that almost everywhere, at the time of his emancipation, the townsman - himself a farming craftsman - had sought to carry the country folk with him to help him throw off the yoke. For two centuries, the townsmen in Italy, Spain and Germany were engaged in a bitter war against the feudal lords. Feats of heroism and perseverance were displayed by the burghers in that war on the castles. They bled themselves white to become masters of the castles of feudalism and to cut down the feudal forest that surrounded them.

But they only partially succeeded. War-weary, they finally made peace over the heads of the peasants. To buy peace, they handed over the peasants to the lord as long as he lived outside the territory conquered by the commune. In Italy and Germany they ended by accepting the lord as burgher, on condition that he came

to live in the commune. Elsewhere they finished by sharing his dominion over the peasant. And the lord took his revenge on this 'low rabble' of the towns, whom he hated and despised, making blood flow on the streets by struggles and the practice of retaliation among noble families, which did not bring their differences before the syndics and the communal judges but settled them with the sword, in the street, driving one section of town-dwellers against another.

The lord also demoralized the commune with his favors, by intrigues, his lordly way of life and by his education received at the Court of the bishop or the king. He induced it to share his ambitions. And the burgher ended by imitating the lord. He became in his turn a lord, he too getting rich from distant commerce or from the labour of the serfs penned up in the villages.

After which, the peasant threw in his lot with the kings, the emperors, budding tsars and the popes when they set about building their kingdoms and subjecting the towns. Where the peasant did not march under their orders neither did he oppose them.

It is in the country, in a fortified castle, situated in the middle of rural communities that monarchy slowly came to be established. In the twelfth century, it existed in name only, and we know today what to think of the rogues, leaders of small bands of brigands who

adorned themselves with that name; a name which in any case - as Augustin Thierry has so well observed - didn't mean very much at the time, when there were "the king (the superior, the senior) of the law courts", the "king of the nets" (among fishermen), the "king of the beggars".

Slowly, gropingly, a baron who was favorably situated in one region, and more powerful or more cunning than the others, would succeed in raising himself above his confreres. The Church hastened to support him. And by force, scheming, money, sword and poison if need be, one such feudal baron would grow in power at the expense of the others. But royal authority never succeeded in constituting itself in any of the free cities, which had their noisy forum, their Tarpeian Rock, or their river for the tyrants; it succeeded in the towns which had grown in the bosom of the country.

After having sought in vain to constitute this authority in Rheims, or in Laon, it was in Paris - an agglomeration of villages and boroughs surrounded by a rich countryside, which had not yet known the life of free cities; it was in Westminster, at the gates of the populous City of London; it was in the Kremlin, built in the center of rich villages on the banks of the Moskva [river] after having failed in Suzdal and in Vladimir - but never in Novgorod, Pskov, Nuremberg, Laon or Florence - that royal authority was consolidated.

The peasants from the surroundings supplied the nascent monarchies with food, horses and men; commerce - royal and not communal in this case - added to their wealth. The Church surrounded them with its attention. It protected them, came to their aid with its wealth, invested for them in their local saint and his miracles. It surrounded with its veneration the Notre Dame of Paris or the Image of the Virgin of Iberia in Moscow. And while the civilization of the free cities, freed from the bishops, gathered its youthful momentum, the Church worked relentlessly to reconstitute its authority through the intermediary of the nascent monarchy, surrounding with its attention, incense and money the royal cradle of the one it had finally chosen to re-establish with him and through him, its ecclesiastical authority. In Paris, Moscow, Madrid and Prague you see the Church bending over the cradle of royalty, a lighted torch in her hand, the executioner by her side.

Hard-working and tenacious, strengthened by her statist education, leaning on the man of strong will or cunning whom she would look for in no matter what class of society, made for intrigue and versed in Roman and Byzantine law - you can see her unrelentingly marching towards her ideal: the absolute Judaic king who nevertheless obeys the high priest - the secular arm at the orders of the ecclesiastical power.

In the sixteenth century, this slow labor of the two conspirators is already operating at full force. A king already dominates his rival fellow barons, and this power will soon be directed against the free cities to crush them in their turn.

Besides, the towns of the sixteenth century were no longer what they had been in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Born of the libertarian revolution, they nevertheless lacked the courage or the strength to spread their ideas of equality to the neighboring countryside, not even to those who had come later to settle in the city precincts, those sanctuaries of freedom, where they created the industrial crafts.

In every town one finds a distinction being drawn between the families who made the revolution of the twelfth century (simply known as 'the families and those who came later and established themselves in the city. The old 'merchant guild' would not hear of accepting newcomers. It refused to absorb the 'young arts' into the commercial field. And from the simple steward to the city that it was in former times, when it carried out the external trade for the whole city, it became the middleman who got rich on his own account through foreign trade. It imported Oriental ostentation, it became moneylender to the city,

and later joined the city lord and the priest against 'the lower orders'; or instead it looked to the nascent king for support of its right to enrichment and its commercial monopoly. Once commerce becomes personal the free city is destroyed.

Moreover, the guilds of the old trades, which at the beginning made up the city and its government, do not wish to recognize the same rights for the young guilds, established later by the new crafts. The latter have to conquer their rights by a revolution. And it is what they do everywhere. But whereas in some cities that revolution is the starting point for a renewal of all aspects of life as well as the arts (this is so clearly seen in Florence), in other cities it ends in the victory of the popolo grasso over the popolo basso - by a crushing repression with mass deportations and executions, especially when the seigneurs and priests interfere.

And need one add that the king will use as a pretext the defense of the lower classes in order to crush the 'fat classes' and to subjugate both once he has become master of the city!

And then, the cities had to die, since even men's ideas had changed. The teaching of canonic law and Roman law had modified people's way of thinking.

The twelfth century European was fundamentally a federalist. As a man of free enterprise, and of free understanding, of associations which were freely sought and agreed to, he saw in himself the point of departure for the whole of society. He did not seek safety through obedience nor did he ask for a savior for society. The idea of Christian and Roman discipline was unknown to him.

But under the influence of the Christian church - always in love with authority, always anxious to be the one to impose its dominion over the souls, and above all the work of the faithful; and on the other hand, under the influence of Roman law which by the twelfth century had already appeared at the courts of the powerful lords, the kings and the popes, and soon became the favorite subject at the universities - under the influence of these two teachings which are so much in accord even though originally they were bitter enemies, minds became corrupted as the priest and the legislator took over.

Man fell in love with authority. If a revolution of the lower trades took place in a commune, the commune would call for a savior, thus saddling itself with a dictator, a municipal Caesar; it would grant him full powers to exterminate the opposition party. And he took advantage of the situation, using all the refinements in cruelty suggested to him by the Church or those borrowed from the despotic kingdoms of the Orient.

He would no doubt have the support of the Church. Had she not always dreamed of the biblical king who will kneel before the high priest and be his docile instrument? Has she not always hated with all her force those rationalist ideas which breathed in the free towns at the time of the first Renaissance, that of the twelfth century? Did she not lay her curse on those 'pagan' ideas which brought man back to nature under the influence of the rediscovery of Greek civilization? And later did she not get the princes to stifle these ideas which, in the name of primitive Christianity, raised up men against the pope, the priest and religion in general? Fire, the wheel and the gibbet - those weapons so dear at all times to the Church - were used to crush the heretics. No matter what the instrument might be: pope, king or dictator, so long as fire, the wheel and the gibbet operated against her enemies.

And in the shadow of this double indoctrination, of the Roman jurist and the priest, the federalist spirit which had created the free commune, the spirit of initiative and free association was dying out and making way for the spirit of discipline, and pyramidal authoritarian organization. Both the rich and the poor were asking for a savior.

And when the savior appeared; when the king, enriched far from turmoil of the forum in some town of his creation, propped up by the

inordinately wealthy Church and followed by defeated nobles and by their peasants, knocked at the gates of the city, promising the 'lower classes' royal protection against the rich and to the submissive rich his protection against the rebellious poor - the towns, already undermined by the cancer of authority, lacked the strength to resist him.

The great invasions of Europe by waves of peoples who had come once more from the East, assisted the rising royalty in this work of concentration of powers.

The Mongols had conquered and devastated Eastern Europe in the thirteenth century, and soon an empire was founded there in Moscow, under the protection of the khans of Tartary and the Russian Christian Church. The Turks had come to impose themselves in Europe and pushed forward as far as Vienna, destroying everything in their way. As a result a number of powerful States were created in Poland, Bohemia, Hungary and in Central Europe to resist these two invasions. Meanwhile at the other extremity, the war of extermination waged against the Moors in Spain allowed another powerful empire to be created in Castille and Aragon, supported by the Roman Church and the Inquisition - by the sword and the stake.

These invasions and wars inevitably led Europe to enter a new phase - that of military states.

Since the communes themselves were becoming minor States, these were bound in due course to be swallowed up by the larger ones.

SECTION VII

The victory of the State over the communes of the Middle Ages and the federalist institutions of the time was nevertheless not sudden. There was a period when it was sufficiently threatened for the outcome to be in doubt.

A vast popular movement - religious in its form and expressions but eminently equalitarian and communist in its aspirations - emerged in the towns and countryside of Central Europe.

Already, in the fourteenth century (in 1358 in France and in 1381 in England) two similar movements had come into being. The two powerful uprisings of the Jaquerie and of Wat Tyler had shaken society to its very foundations. Both however had been principally directed against the nobility, and though both had been defeated, they had broken feudal power. The uprising of peasants in England had put an end to serfdom and the Jaquerie in France had so severely checked serfdom in its development that from then on the institution simply vegetated, without ever reaching the power that it was to achieve later in Germany and throughout Eastern Europe.

Now, in the sixteenth century, a similar movement appeared in Central Europe. Under the name of the Hussite uprising in Bohemia, Anabaptism in Germany, Switzerland and in the Low Countries, it was - apart from the

revolt against the Lords - a complete uprising against the State and Church, against Roman and canon law, in the name of primitive Christianity. [3]

For a long time misrepresented by Statist and ecclesiastical historians, this movement is only beginning to be understood today.

The absolute freedom of the individual, who must only obey the commands of his conscience, and communism were the watchwords of this uprising. And it was only later once the State and Church had succeeded in exterminating its most ardent defenders and directing it to their own ends, that this movement reduced in importance and deprived of its revolutionary character, became the Lutheran Reformation.

With Luther the movement was welcomed by the princes; but it had begun as communist anarchism, advocated and put into practice in some places. And if one looks beyond the religious phraseology which was a tribute to the times, one finds in it the very essence of the current of ideas which we represent today: the negation of laws made by the State or said to be divinely inspired, the individual conscience being the one and only law; commune, absolute master of its destiny, taking back from the Lords the communal lands and refusing to pay dues in kind or in money to the State; in other words communism and equality put into practice.

Thus when Denck, one of the philosophers of the Anabaptist movement, was asked whether nevertheless he recognized the authority of the Bible, he replied that the only rule of conduct which each individual finds for himself in the Bible, was obligatory for him. And meanwhile, such vague formulas - derived from ecclesiastical jargon - that authority of 'the book' from which one so easily borrows arguments for and against communism, for and against authority, and so indefinite when it is a question of clearly affirming freedom - did not this religious tendency alone contain the germ for the certain defeat of the uprising?

Born in the towns, the movement soon spread to the countryside. The peasants refused to obey anybody and fixing an old shoe on a pike in the manner of a flag they would go about recovering the land from the lords, breaking the bonds of serfdom, driving away priest and judge, and forming themselves into free communes. And it was only by the stake, the wheel and the gibbet, by the massacre of a hundred thousand peasants in a few years, that royal or imperial power, allied to that of papal or Reformed Church - Luther encouraging the massacre of the peasants with more virulence than the pope - that put an end to those uprisings which had for a period threatened the consolidation of the nascent States.

Lutherian Reform which had sprung from popular Anabaptism, was supported by the

State, massacred the people and crushed the movement from which it had drawn its strength in the beginning. Then, the remnants of the popular wave sought refuge in the communities of the 'Moravian Brothers', who in their turn were destroyed a century later by the Church and the State. Those among them who were not exterminated went to seek sanctuary, some in South Eastern Russia (the Mennonite community since emigrated to Canada), some to Greenland where they have managed ever since to live in communities and refusing all service to the State.

Henceforth the State was assured of its existence. The jurist, the priest and the war lord, joined in an alliance around the thrones, were able to pursue their work of annihilation.

How many lies have been accumulated by Statist historians, in the pay of the State, on that period!

Indeed have we not all learned at school for instance that the State had performed the great service of creating, out of the ruins of feudal society, national unions which had previously been made impossible by the rivalries between cities? Having learned this at school, almost all of us have gone on believing this to be true in adulthood.

And yet, now we learn that in spite of all the rivalries, medieval cities had already worked

for four centuries toward building those unions, through federation, freely consented, and that they had succeeded.

For instance, the union of Lombardy, comprised the cities of Northern Italy with its federal treasury in Milan. Other federations such as the union of Tuscany, the union of Rhineland (which comprised sixty towns), the federations of Westphalia, of Bohemia, of Serbia, Poland and of Russian towns, covered Europe. At the same time, the commercial union of the Hanse included Scandinavian, German, Polish and Russian towns in all the Baltic basin. There were already all the elements, as well as the fact itself, of large groupings freely constituted.

Do you require the living proof of these groupings? You have it in Switzerland! There, the union first asserted itself among the village communes (the old cantons), just as at the same time in France it was constituted in the Lyonnais. And since in Switzerland the separation between town and village had not been as far-reaching as in the countries where the towns were engaged in large-scale commerce with distant parts, the towns gave assistance to the peasant insurrection of the sixteenth century and thus the union included towns and villages to constitute a federation which continues to this day.

But the State, by its very nature, cannot tolerate a free federation: it represents that

bogie of all jurists, `a State within the State. The State cannot recognize a freely-formed union operating within itself; it only recognizes subjects. The State and its sister the Church arrogate to themselves alone the right to serve as the link between men.

Consequently, the State must, perforce, wipe out cities based on the direct union between citizens. It must abolish all unions within the city, as well as the city itself, and wipe out all direct union between the cities. For the federal principle it must substitute the principle of submission and discipline. Such is the stuff of the State, for without this principle it ceases to be State.

And the sixteenth century - a century of carnage and wars - can be summed up quite simply by this struggle of the nascent State against the free towns and their federations. The towns were besieged, stormed, and sacked, their inhabitants decimated or deported.

The State in the end wins total victory. And these are the consequences:

In the sixteenth century Europe was covered with rich cities, whose artisans, masons, weavers and engravers produced marvelous works of art; their universities established the foundations of modern empirical science, their caravans covered the continents, their vessels ploughed the seas and rivers.

What remained two centuries later? Towns with anything from 50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants and which (as was the case of Florence) had a greater proportion of schools and, in the communal hospitals, beds, in relation to the population than is the case with the most favored towns today, became rotten boroughs. Their populations were decimated or deported, the State and Church took over their wealth. Industry was dying out under the rigorous control of the State's employees; commerce dead. Even the roads which had hitherto linked these cities became impassable in the seventeenth century.

State is synonymous with war. Wars devastated Europe and managed to finish off the towns which the State had not yet directly destroyed.

With the towns crushed, at least the villages gained something from the concentration of State power? Of course not! One has only to read what the historians tell us of life in the Scottish countryside, or in Tuscany and in Germany in the sixteenth century and compare these accounts with those of extreme poverty in England in the years around 1648, in France under Louis XIV - the 'Roi Soleil' - in Germany, in Italy, everywhere, after a century of State domination.

Historians are unanimous in declaring that extreme poverty exists everywhere. In those

places where serfdom had been abolished, it is reconstituted under a thousand new guises; and where it had not yet been destroyed, it emerges under the aegis of ancient slavery or worse. In Russia it was the nascent State of the Romanovs that introduced serfdom and soon gave it the characteristics of slavery.

But could anything else come out of Statal wretchedness since its first concern, once the towns had been crushed, was to destroy the village commune and all the ties between the peasants, and then to surrender their lands to sacking by the rich and to bring them all individually into subjection to the official, the priest or the lord?

[3] The time of troubles in Russia at the beginning of the seventeenth century, represent a similar movement, directed against serfdom and the State but without a religious basis.

SECTION VIII

The role of the nascent State in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in relation to the urban centers was to destroy the independence of the cities; to pillage the rich guilds of merchants and artisans; to concentrate in its hands the external commerce of the cities and ruin it; to lay hands on the internal administration of the guilds and subject internal commerce as well as all manufactures, in every detail to the control of a host of officials - and in this way to kill industry and the arts; by taking over the local militias and the whole municipal administration, crushing the weak in the interest of the strong by taxation, and ruining the countries by wars.

Obviously the same tactic was applied to the villages and the peasants. Once the State felt strong enough it eagerly set about destroying the village commune, ruining the peasants in its clutches and plundering the common lands.

Historians and economists in the pay of the State teach us, of course, that the village commune having become an outdated form of land possession - which hampered progress in agriculture - had to disappear under 'the action of natural economic forces'. The politicians and the bourgeois economists are still saying the same thing now; and there are even some revolutionaries and socialists who

claim to be scientific socialists who repeat this stock fable learned at school.

Well, never has such an odious lie been uttered in the name of science. A calculated lie since history abounds with documents to prove for those who want to know - and for France it would simply suffice to consult Dalloz - that in the first place the State deprived the village commune of all its powers: its independence, its juridical and legislative powers; and that afterwards its lands were either simply stolen by the rich with the connivance of the State, or confiscated by the State directly.

In France the pillage started in the sixteenth century, and followed its course at a greater pace in the following century. From 1659 the State started taking the communes under its wing, and one has only to refer to Louis XIV's edict of 1667, to appreciate on what a scale communal goods were already being pillaged during that period. "Each one has made the best of it for his best interests...they have been shared...to fleece the communes one made use of fictitious debts," the 'Roi Soleil' said in that edict...and two years later he confiscated all the communes' income to his own advantage. Such is the meaning of 'a natural death' in the language which claims to be scientific.

In the following century, at a low estimate, half the communally owned lands were simply taken over by the nobility and the clergy under the aegis of the State. And nevertheless the

commune continued in existence until 1787. The village assembly met under the elm tree, apportioned the lands, distributed the tax demands - documentary evidence can be found in Babeau (*Le village sous l'ancien regime*). Turgot, in the province in which he was the administrator, had already found the village assemblies 'too noisy', and under his administration they were abolished and replaced by assemblies elected from among the village big-wigs. And on the eve of the Revolution of 1787, the State generalized that measure. The mir had been abolished, and the affairs of the commune thus came into the hands of a few syndics, elected by the richest bourgeois and peasants.

The Constituent Assembly lost no time in confirming this law in December 1789, and the bourgeois took the place of the lords to divest the communes of what communal lands remained to them. It therefore needed one *Jacquerie* after another in 1793 to confirm what the peasants in revolt had just achieved in Eastern France. That is to say the Constituent Assembly gave orders for the return of the communal lands to the peasants - which was in fact only done when already achieved by revolutionary action. It is the fate of all revolutionary laws, and it is time that it was understood. They are only enacted after the *fait accompli*.

But whilst recognizing the right of the communes to the lands that had been taken

away from them since 1669, the law had to add some of its bourgeois venom. Its intention was that the communal lands should be shared in equal parts only among the 'citizens' - that is among the village bourgeoisie. By a stroke of the pen it wanted to dispossess the 'inhabitants' and the bulk of the impoverished peasants, who were most in need of these lands. Whereupon, fortunately, there were new Jacqueries and in July 1793 the convention authorized the distribution of the land among all the inhabitants individually - again something that was carried out only here and there, and served as a pretext for a new pillage of communal lands.

Were these measures not already enough to provoke what those gentlemen call 'the natural death' of the commune? yet for all that the commune went on living. So on August 24, 1794, reaction having seized power, it struck the major blow. The State confiscated all the communal lands and used them as a guarantee fund for the National Debt, putting them up for auction and surrendering them to its creatures, the Thermidorians.

This law was happily repealed on the 2 Prairial, Year V, after three years of rushing after the spoils. But by the same stroke of the pen the communes were abolished and replaced by cantonal councils, in order that the State could the more easily pack them with its creatures. This lasted until 1801 when the village communes were reintroduced; but then

the Government itself undertook to appoint the mayors and syndics in each of the 36,000 communes! And this absurdity lasted until the Revolution of July 1830, after which the law of 1789 was reintroduced. And in the meantime, the communal lands were again confiscated entirely by the State in 1813 and pillaged for the next three years. What remained was not returned to the communes until 1816.

Do you think that was the end? Not at all! Each new regime saw in the communal lands a means of compensating its henchmen. Thus from 1830, on three different occasions - the first in 1837 and the last under Napoleon III - laws were promulgated to force the peasants to share what remained to them of the communal forests and pastures, and three times was the State obliged to abrogate these laws because of the resistance of the peasants. Nevertheless, Napoleon III took advantage of this situation to seize a few large estates and to make presents of them to his creatures.

Such are the facts. And this is what those gentlemen call in 'scientific' language the natural death of communal ownership 'under the influence of economic laws'. One might as well call the massacre of a hundred thousand soldiers on the battlefield natural death!

Now, what was done in France was also done in Belgium, in England, Germany and in Austria - everywhere in Europe except in the Slav countries. [4]

But then, the periods of outbreaks of pillaging of the communes are linked throughout Europe. Only the methods vary. Thus in England, they dared not proceed with general measures; but preferred to pass through Parliament some thousands of separate Enclosure Acts by which, in every special case, Parliament sanctioned confiscation - it does so to this day - and gave the squire the right to keep the communal lands that he had ring-fenced. And whereas nature had until now respected the narrow furrows by which the communal fields were divided temporarily among the families of a village in England, and though we have in the writings of somebody called Marshal clear descriptions of this form of possession at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and though communal economy has survived in some communes, [5] up to the present time, there is no lack of scholars (such as Seebohm, worthy emulator of Fustel de Coulanges) to maintain and teach that the commune never existed in England except in the form of serfdom!

In Belgium, in Germany, in Italy and Spain we find the same methods being used. And in one way or another the individual seizure of the lands that were once communal was almost completed in Western Europe by the 1850s. Of their communal lands the peasants only retain a few scraps.

This is the way the mutual alliance between the lord, the priest, the soldier and the judge, that we call the 'State', acted towards the peasants, in order to strip them of their last guarantee against extreme poverty and economic bondage.

But while the State was condoning and organizing this pillage, could it respect the institution of the commune as the organ of local affairs? Obviously, it could not. For to admit that some citizens should constitute a federation which takes over some of the functions of the State would have been a contradiction of first principles. The State demands from its subjects a direct, personal submission without intermediaries; it demands equality in slavery; it cannot admit of a State within a State.

Thus as soon as the State began to be constituted in the sixteenth century, it sought to destroy all the links which existed among the citizens both in the towns and in the villages. Where it tolerated, under the name of municipal institutions, some remnants of autonomy - never of independence - it was only for fiscal reasons, to reduce correspondingly the central budget; or also to give the big-wigs of the province a chance to get rich at the expense of the people, as was the case in England, quite legally until recent years, and to this day in its institutions and customs.

This is understandable. Local affairs are a matter of customary law whereas the centralization of powers is a matter of Roman law. The two cannot live side by side; the latter had to destroy the other.

It is for this reason that under the French regime in Algeria when a kabyle djemmah - a village commune - wants to plead for its lands, each inhabitant of the commune must lodge a personal complaint with the tribunals who will deal with fifty or two hundred isolated cases rather than accept the commune's collective plea. The Jacobin code developed in the Code Napoleon hardly recognizes customary law, preferring Roman law or rather Byzantine law.

It is for this reason, again in France, that when the wind blows down a tree onto the national highway, or a peasant whose turn it is to repair the communal lane prefers to pay two or three francs to a stone breaker to do it - from twelve to fifteen employees of the Ministries of the Interior and of Finance have to be involved and more than fifty documents passed between these austere functionaries, before the tree can be sold, or before the peasant can receive permission to hand over his two or three francs to the communal treasury.

Those who may have doubts as to the veracity of this statement will find these fifty documents listed and duly numbered by M.

Tricoche in the Journal des Economistes (April 1893).

That was of course under the Third Republic, for I am not talking about the barbaric procedure of the 'ancient regime' which was satisfied with five or at the most six documents. But the scholars will tell you that in more barbaric days, the control by the State was a sham.

And were it only paper work! It would only mean, after all, 20,000 officials too many, and another billion added to the budget. A mere trifle for the lovers of 'order' and alignment!

But at the bottom of all this is something much worse. There is the principle that destroys everything.

Peasants in a village have a large number of interests in common: household interests, neighborhood, constant relationships. They are inevitably led to come together for a thousand different things. But the State does not want this, nor can it allow them to join together! After all the State gives them the school and the priest, the gendarme and the judge - this should be sufficient. And if other interests arise they can be dealt with through the usual channels of State and Church!

Thus until 1883 villagers in France were strictly prohibited from combining be it only for the purpose of bulk-buying of chemical

fertilizers or the irrigation of their meadows. It was not until 1883-1886 that the Republic made up its mind to grant the peasants this right, by voting in the law on trades unions which however was hedged in with provisos and conditions.

And we who are stupefied by State education can rejoice in the sudden advances made by agricultural unions, without blushing at the thought that this right which has been denied the peasants until now, was one enjoyed without question by every man - free or serf - in the Middle Ages. We have become such slaves that we already look upon it as a 'victory for democracy'. This is the stage we have reached in brainwashing thanks to a system of education deformed and vitiated by the State, and our Statist prejudices!

[4] It is already being done in Russia, the government having authorized the pillaging of communal lands under the law of 1906 and favored this pillage by its own functionaries.

[5] See Dr. Gilbert Slater 'The Enclosure of Common Fields' in the Geographical Journal of the Geographical Society of London, with plans and maps, January 1907. Later published in volume form.

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SECTION IX

"If in the town and the village you have common interests, then ask the State or the church to deal with them but for you to get together to deal with these interests is forbidden." This is what echoes throughout Europe from the sixteenth century

Already at the end of the fourteenth century an edict by Edward III, King of England, stated that "every alliance, connivance, gatherings, meetings, enactments and solemn oaths made or to t made between carpenters and masons, are null and void". But it was only after the defeat of the villages and of the popular uprisings, to which we have already referred, that the State dared to interfere with all the institutions - guilds, brotherhoods, etc. - which bound the artisans together, to disband and destroy them. This is what one sees so clearly in England since the vast documentation available allows one to follow this movement step by step. Little by little the State takes over all the guilds and brotherhoods. It besets them, abolishes their conjurations, their syncs, which they replace by their officers, their tribunals and their banquets; and at the beginning of the sixteenth century under Henry VIII, the State simply confiscates all that the guilds possess without bothering with formalities or procedure. The heir of the protestant king completes his task.

It is daylight robbery, without apologies as Thorold Rogers so well put it. And again, it is this theft that the so-called scientific economists describe as the 'natural' death of the guilds under the influence of 'economic laws'!

Indeed, could the State tolerate the guild, the trade corporation, with its tribunal, its militia, its treasury, its sworn organisation? It was the State within the State! The real State had to destroy it and this it did everywhere: in England, in France, in Germany, Bohemia and Russia, maintaining only the pretence for the sake of the tax collector and as part of its huge administrative machine. And surely there is no reason to be surprised that once the guilds, and guild masterships were deprived of all that hitherto had been their lives, were put under the orders of the royal officials and had simply become cogs in the machinery of administration, that by the eighteenth century they were a hindrance, an obstacle to industrial development, in spite of the fact that for four centuries before that they represented life itself. The State had destroyed them.

But the State was not satisfied with putting a spoke in the wheels of life of the sworn brotherhoods of trades which embarrassed it by placing themselves between it and its subjects. It was not satisfied with confiscating their funds and their properties. The State had to take over their functions as well as their assets.

In a city of the Middle Ages, when there was a conflict of interests within a trade or where two different guilds were in disagreement, the only recourse was to the city. They were obliged to come to an agreement, to any kind of compromise arrangement, since they were all mutually tied up with the city. And the latter never failed to assert itself, either by arbitration or at a pinch by referring the dispute to another city. From then on, the State was the only judge. All local conflicts including insignificant disputes in small towns with only a few hundred inhabitants, accumulated in the form of documents in the offices of the king or of parliament. The English parliament was literally inundated by thousands of minor local squabbles. As a result thousands of officials were required in the capital - most of them corruptible - to read, classify, and form an opinion on all this litigation and adjudicate on the smallest details: for example how to shoe a horse, to bleach linen, to salt herrings, to make a barrel and so on ad infinitum, and the wave of questions went on increasing in volume!

But this was not all. In due course the State took over export trade, seeing it as a source of profit. Formerly, when a difference arose between two towns on the value of cloth that had been exported, or of the quality of wool or over the capacity of herring barrels, the towns themselves would remonstrate with each other. If the disagreement dragged on, more

often than not they would invite another town to arbitrate. Alternatively a congress of the weavers or coopers guilds would be summoned to decide on an international level the quality and value of cloth and the capacity of barrels.

But henceforth it was the State in London or in Paris which undertook to deal with these disputes. Through its officials it controlled the capacity of barrels, defined the quality of cloth, allowing for variations as well as establishing the number of threads and their thickness in the warp and the woof, and by its ordinances meddling with the smallest details in every industry.

You can guess with what results. Under such control industry in the eighteenth century was dying.

What had in fact come of Benvenuto Cellini's art under State tutelage? it had disappeared! And the architecture of those guilds of masons and carpenters whose works of art we still admire? Just observe the hideous monuments of the statist period and at one glance you will come to the conclusion that architecture was dead, to such an extent that it has not yet recovered from the blows it received at the hands of the State.

What was happening to the textiles of Bruges and the cloth from Holland Where were these

iron-smiths, so skilled in handling iron and who, in every important European village, knew how to make this ungrateful metal lend itself to transformation into the most exquisite decorations? Where were those turners, those watchmakers, those fitters who had made Nuremberg one of the glories of the Middle Ages for precision instruments? Talk about it to James Watt who two centuries later spent thirty years in vain, looking for a worker who could produce a more or less circular cylinder for his steam engine. Consequently his machine remained at the project stage for thirty years because there were no craftsmen able to construct it.

Such was the role of the State in the industrial field. All it was capable of doing was to tighten the screw for the worker depopulate the countryside, spread misery in the towns, reduce industrial serfdom beings to a state of starvation and impose

And it is these pitiful remains of the old guilds, these organisms which have been battered and over-taxed, these useless cogs of the administrative machine, which the ever scientific' economists are so ignorant as to confuse with the guilds of the Middle Ages. What the Great French Revolution swept away as harmful to industry was not the guild, nor even the trade union, but the useless and harmful cog in the machinery of State.

But what the Revolution was at pains not to sweep away was the power of the State over industry, over the factory serf.

Do you remember the discussion which took place at the Convention - at the terrible Convention - apropos of a strike? To the complaints of the strikers the Convention replied: "The State alone has the duty to watch over the interests of all citizens. By striking, you are forming a coalition, you are creating a State within the State. So - death!"

In this reply only the bourgeois nature of the Revolution has been discerned. But has it not, in fact, a much deeper significance? Does it not sum up the attitude of the State, which found its complete and logical expression in regard to society as a whole in the Jacobinism of 1793? "Have you something to complain about? Then address your complaint to the State! It alone has the mission to redress the grievances of its subjects. As for a coalition to defend yourselves - Never!" It was in this sense that the Republic called itself one and indivisible.

Does not the modern socialist Jacobin think in the same way? Did not the Convention express the gist of Jacobin thought with the cold logic that is typical of it?

In this answer of the Convention was summed up the attitude of all States in regard to all

coalitions and all private societies, whatever their aim.

In the case of the strike, it is a fact that in Russia it is still considered a crime of high treason. In most of Germany too where Wilhelm would say to the miners: "Appeal to me; but if ever you presume to act for yourselves you will taste the swords of my soldiers".

Such is still almost always the case in France. And even in England, only after having struggled for a century by means of secret societies, by the dagger for traitors and for the masters, by explosive powders under machines (as late as 1860), by emery powder poured into grease-boxes and so on, did British workers begin to win the right to strike, and will soon have it altogether - if they don't fall into the traps already set for them by the State, in seeking to impose compulsory arbitration in return for an eight hour day.

More than a century of bitter struggles! And what misery! how many workers died in prison, were transported to Australia, were shot or hanged, in order to win back the right to combine which - let it be remembered once more - every man free or serf practised freely so long as the State did not lay its heavy hand on societies.

But then, was it the workman only who was treated in this way?

Let us simply recall the struggles that the bourgeoisie had to wage against the State to win the right to constitute itself into commercial societies - a right which the State only began to concede when it discovered a convenient way of creating monopolies for the benefit of its creatures and to fill its coffers. Think of the struggle for the right to speak, think or write other than the way the State decrees through the Academy, the University and the Church! Think of the struggles that have had to be waged to this day in order to be able to teach children to read - a right which the State possesses but does not use! Even of the struggles to secure the right to enjoy oneself in public! Not to mention those which should be waged in order to dare to choose one's judge and one's laws - a thing that was in daily use in other times - nor the struggles that will be needed before one is able to make a bonfire of that book of infamous punishments, invented by the spirit of the inquisition and of the despotic empires of the Orient known under the name of the Penal Code!

Observe next taxation - an institution originating purely with the State - this formidable weapon used by the State, in Europe as in the young societies of the two Americas, to keep the masses under its heel, to favour its minions, to ruin the majority for the benefit of the rulers and to maintain the old divisions and castes.

Then take the wars without which States can neither constitute themselves nor maintain themselves; wars which become disastrous, and inevitable, the moment one admits that a particular region - simply because it is part of a State - has interests opposed to those of its neighbours who are part of another State. Think of past wars and of those that subjected people will have to wage to conquer the right to breathe freely, the wars for markets, the wars to create colonial empires. And in France we unfortunately know only too well that every war, victorious or not, is followed by slavery.

And finally what is even worse than all that has just been enumerated, is the fact that the education we all receive from the State, at school and after, has so warped our minds that the very notion of freedom ends up by being lost, and disguised in servitude.

It is a sad sight to see those who believe themselves to be revolutionaries unleashing their hatred on the anarchist - just because his views on freedom go beyond their petty and narrow concepts of freedom learned in the State school. And meanwhile, this spectacle is a reality. The fact is that the spirit of voluntary servitude was always cleverly cultivated in the minds of the young, and still is, in order to perpetuate the subjection of the individual to the State.

Libertarian philosophy is stifled by the Roman and Catholic pseudo-philosophy of the State.

History is vitiated from the very first page, where it lies when speaking of the Merovingian and Carolingian monarchies, to the last page where it glorifies Jacobinism and refuses to recognise the role of the people in creating the institutions. Natural sciences are perverted in order to be put at the service of the double idol: Church-State. Individual psychology, and even more that of societies, are falsified in each of their assertions in justifying the triple alliance of soldier, priest and judge. Finally, morality, after having preached for centuries obedience to the Church, or the book, achieves its emancipation today only to then preach servility to the State: "No direct moral obligations towards your neighbour, nor even any feeling of solidarity; all your obligations are to the State", we are told, we are taught, in this new cult of the old Roman and Caesarian divinity. "The neighbour, the comrade, the companion - forget them. You will henceforth only know them through the intermediary of some organ or other of your State. And every one of you will make a virtue out of being equally subjected to it."

And the glorification of the State and of its discipline, for which the university and the Church, the press and the political parties labour, is propagated so successfully that even revolutionaries dare not look this fetish straight in the eye.

The modern radical is a centralist. Statist and rabid Jacobin. And the socialist falls into step. Just as the Florentines at the end of the fifteenth century knew no better than to call on the dictatorship of the State to save themselves from the Patricians, so the socialists can only call upon the same Gods, the dictatorship of the State, to save themselves from the horrors of the economic regime created by that very same State!

SECTION X

If one goes a little deeper into these different categories of phenomena which I have hardly touched upon in this short outline one will understand why - seeing the State as it has been in history, and as it is in essence today - and convinced that a social institution cannot lend itself to all the desired goals since as with every organ, it developed according to the function it performed, in a definite direction and not in all possible directions - one will understand, I say, why the conclusion we arrive at is for the abolition of the State.

We see it in the Institution, developed in the history of human societies to prevent the direct association among men to shackle the development of local and individual initiative, to crush existing liberties, to prevent their new blossoming - all this in order to subject the masses to the will of minorities.

And we know an institution which has a long past going back several thousand years cannot lend itself to a function opposed to history for which and by which it was developed in the course of history.

To this absolutely unshakeable argument for anyone who has reflected on history, what reply do we get? One is answered with an almost childish argument:

`The State exists and represents a powerful ready-made organization. Why not use it instead of wanting to destroy it? It operates for evil ends - agreed; but the reason is that it is in the hands of the exploiters. If it were taken over by the people, why would it not be used for better ends, for the good of the people?'

Always the same dream - that of the Marquis de Posa, in Schiller's drama seeking to make an instrument of emancipation out of absolutism; or again the dream of the gentle Abbe Pierre in Zola's Rome wanting to make of the Church the lever for socialism.

How sad it is to have to reply to such arguments! For those who argue in this way either haven't a clue as to the true historic role of the State, or they view the social revolution in such a superficial and painless form that it ceases to have anything in common with their socialist aspirations.

Take the concrete example of France.

All thinking people must have noticed the striking fact that the Third Republic, in spite of its republican form of government, has remained monarchist in essence. We have all reproached it for not having republicanized France - I am not saying that it has done nothing for the social revolution, but that it has not even introduced a morality - that is an outlook which is simply republican. For the little that has been done in the past 25 years to

democratize social attitudes or to spread a little education has been done everywhere, in all the European monarchies, under pressure from the times through which we are passing. Then where does this strange anomaly of a republic which has remained a monarchy come from?

It arises from the fact that France has remained a State, and exactly where it was thirty years ago. The holders of power have changed the name but all that huge ministerial scaffolding, all that centralized organization of white-collar workers, all this apeing of the Rome of the Caesars which has developed in France, all that huge organization to assure and extend the exploitation of the masses in favor of a few privileged groups, which is the essence of the State institution - all that has remained. And those wheels of bureaucracy continue as in the past to exchange their fifty documents when the wind has blown down a tree on to the highway and to transfer the millions deducted from the nation to the coffers of the privileged. The official stamp on the documents has changed; but the State, its spirit, its organs, its territorial centralization, its centralization of functions, its favoritism, and its role as creator of monopolies have remained. Like an octopus they go on spreading their tentacles over the country.

The republicans - and I am speaking of the sincere ones - had cherished the illusion that one could 'utilize the organization of the State'

to effect a change in a Republican direction, and these are the results. Whereas it was necessary to break up the old organization, shatter the State and rebuild a new organization from the very foundations of society - the liberated village commune, federalism, groupings from simple to complex, free working association - they thought of using the 'organization that already existed'. And, not having understood that, one does not make an historical institution follow in the direction to which one points - that is in the opposite direction to the one it has taken over the centuries - they were swallowed up by the institution.

And this happened though in this case it was not even a question yet of changing the whole economic relations in society! The aim was merely to reform only some aspects of political relations between men.

But after such a complex failure, and in the light of such a pitiful experiment, there are those who still insist in telling us that the conquest of powers in the State, by the people, will suffice to accomplish the social revolution! - that the old machine, the old organization, slowly developed in the course of history to crush freedom, to crush the individual, to establish oppression on a legal basis, to create monopolists, to lead minds astray by accustoming them to servitude - will lend itself perfectly to its new functions: that it will become the instrument, the framework for the

germination of a new life, to found freedom and equality on economic bases, the destruction of monopolies, the awakening of society and towards the achievement of a future of freedom and equality!

What a sad and tragic mistake!

To give full scope to socialism entails rebuilding from top to bottom a society dominated by the narrow individualism of the shopkeeper. It is not as has sometimes been said by those indulging in metaphysical wooliness just a question of giving the worker 'the total product of his labour'; it is a question of completely reshaping all relationships, from those which exist today between every individual and his churchwarden or his station-master to those which exist between trades, hamlets, cities and regions. In every street, in every hamlet, in every group of men gathered around a factory or along a section of the railway line, the creative, constructive and organizational spirit must be awakened in order to rebuild life - in the factory, in the village, in the store, in production and in distribution of supplies. All relations between individuals and great centers of population have to be made all over again, from the very day, from the very moment one alters the existing commercial or administrative organization.

And they expect this immense task, requiring the free expression of popular genius, to be

carried out within the framework of the State and the pyramidal organization which is the essence of the State! They expect the State whose very *raison d'être* is the crushing of the individual, the hatred of initiative, the triumph of one idea which must be inevitably that of mediocrity - to become the lever for the accomplishment of this immense transformation. They want to direct the renewal of a society by means of decrees and electoral majorities...How ridiculous!

Throughout the history of our civilization, two traditions, two opposing tendencies have confronted each other: the Roman and the Popular; the imperial and the federalist; the authoritarian and the libertarian. And this is so, once more, on the eve of the social revolution.

Between these two currents, always manifesting themselves, always at grips with each other - the popular trend and that which thirsts for political and religious domination - we have made our choice.

We seek to recapture the spirit which drove people in the twelfth century to organize themselves on the basis of free agreement and individual initiative as well as of the free federation of the interested parties. And we are quite prepared to leave the others to cling to the imperial, the Roman and canonical tradition.

History is not an uninterrupted natural development. Again and again development has stopped in one particular territory only to emerge somewhere else. Egypt, the Near East, the Mediterranean shores and Central Europe have all in turn been centers of historical development. But every time the pattern has been the same: beginning with the phase of the primitive tribe followed by the village commune; then by the free city, finally to die with the advent of the State.

In Egypt, civilization begins with the primitive tribe. It advances to the village commune and later to the period of the free cities; later still to the State which, after a period in which it flourished, leads to death.

Development starts afresh in Syria, in Persia and in Palestine. It follows the same pattern: the tribe, the village commune, the free city, the all-powerful State and...death!

A new civilization then comes to life in Greece. Always through the tribe. Slowly it reaches the level of the village commune and then to the republican cities. In these cities civilization reaches its zenith. But the East communicates its poisonous breath, its traditions of despotism. Wars and conquests create the Empire of Alexander of Macedonia. The State asserts itself, grows, destroys all culture and...it is death.

Rome in its turn restarts civilization. Once more one finds at the beginning the primitive tribe, then the village commune followed by the city. At this phase Rome was at the height of its civilization. But then come the State and the Empire and then...death!

On the ruins of the Roman Empire, Celtic, Germanic, Slavonic and Scandanavian tribes once more take up the threads of civilization. Slowly the primitive tribe develops its institutions and manages to build up the village commune. It lingers in this phase until the twelfth century when the republican city arises, and this brings with it the blossoming of the human spirit, proof of which are the masterpieces of architecture, the grandiose development of the arts, the discoveries which lay the foundations of natural sciences...But then the State emerges...Death? Yes: death - or renewal!

Either the State for ever, crushing individual and local life, taking over in all fields of human activity, bringing with it all its wars and domestic struggles for power, its palace revolutions which only replace one tyrant by another, and inevitably at the end of this development there is...death!

Or the destruction of States, and new life starting again in thousands of centers on the principles of the lively initiative of the

individual and groups and that of free agreement.

The choice lies with you!

ON THE ASSASSINATION OF ALEXANDER II(1908)

PETER KROPOTKIN

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James Harvey Robinson and Charles Beard, eds., vol. 2
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In February, 1881, Melikoff reported that a new plot had been laid by the Revolutionary Executive Committee, but its plan could not be discovered by any amount of searching. Thereupon Alexander II decided that a sort of deliberative assembly of delegates from the provinces should be called. Always under the idea that he would share the fate of Louis XVI, he described this gathering as an assembly of notables, like the one convoked by Louis XVI before the National Assembly in 1789. The scheme had to be laid before the Council of State, but then again he hesitated. It was only on the morning of March 1 (13), 1881, after a final warning by Loris Melikoff, that he ordered it to be brought before the council on the following Thursday. This was on Sunday, and he was asked by Melikoff not to go out to the parade that day, there being danger of an attempt on his life. Nevertheless he went. He wanted to see the Grand Duchess Catherine, and to carry her the welcome news. He is reported to have told her, "I have determined to summon an assembly of notables." However,

this belated and half-hearted concession had not been made public, and on his way back to the Winter Palace he was killed.

It is known how it happened. A bomb was thrown under his iron-clad carriage to stop it. Several Circassians of the escort were wounded. Rysakoff, who flung the bomb, was arrested on the spot. Then, although the coachman of the Tsar earnestly advised him not to get out, saying that he could drive him still in the slightly damaged carriage, he insisted upon alighting. He felt that his military dignity required him to see the wounded Circassians, to condole with them as he had done with the wounded during the Turkish war, when a mad storming of Plevna, doomed to end in a terrible disaster, was made on the day of his fête. He approached Rysakoff and asked him something; and as he passed close by another young man, Grinevetsky, the latter threw a bomb between himself and Alexander II, so that both of them should be killed. They both lived but a few hours.

There Alexander II lay upon the snow, profusely bleeding, abandoned by every one of his followers. All had disappeared. It was cadets, returning from the parade, who lifted the suffering Tsar from the snow and put him in a sledge, covering his shivering body with a cadet mantle and his bare head with a cadet cap. And it was one of the terrorists, Emelianoff, with a bomb wrapped in a paper under his arm, who, at the risk of being

arrested on the spot and hanged, rushed with the cadets to the help of the wounded man. Human nature is full of those contrasts.

Thus ended the tragedy of Alexander II's life. People could not understand how it was possible that a Tsar who had done so much for Russia should have met his death at the hands of revolutionists. To me, who had the chance of witnessing the first reactionary steps of Alexander II, and his gradual deterioration, who had caught a glimpse of his complex personality, -- that of a born autocrat whose violence was but partially mitigated by education, of a man possessed of military gallantry, but devoid of the courage of the statesman, of a man of strong passions and weak will, -- it seemed that the tragedy developed with the unavoidable fatality of one of Shakespeare's dramas. Its last act was already written for me on the day when I heard him address us, the promoted officers, on June 13, 1862, immediately after he had ordered the first executions in Poland.

THE TERROR IN RUSSIA.(1909)

KROPOTKIN, PETER.

INTRODUCTION

The present conditions in Russia are so desperate that it is a public duty to lay before this country a statement of these conditions, with a solemn appeal to all lovers of liberty and progress for moral support in the struggle that is now going on for the conquest of political freedom.

In the struggle for freedom each country must work out its own salvation; but we should not forget that there exists a web of international solidarity between all civilised countries. It is true that the loans contracted by the heads of despotic states in foreign countries contribute to support despotism. But Russian exiles also know from their own experience how the moral support which the fighters for liberty have never failed to find in the enlightened portions of the civilised nations has been helpful to them, and how much it has aided them to maintain faith in the ultimate victory of freedom and justice.

It has been decided, therefore, to issue the present statement, in which, after a careful inquiry, a large amount of well-authenticated facts has been brought together, giving an insight into the deplorable conditions that now

prevail in Russia. Attention has been chiefly directed to the conditions which are found in the Russian prisons and among the exiles--conditions so deplorable that they leave far behind all that as been published in this country about the Russian prisons and exile for the last thirty years--even during the reaction that set in after the year 1881.

In preparing this statement the utmost pains have been taken to eliminate all facts and accusations which have not been authenticated. Either they have been officially corroborated by sentences of the Courts pronounced upon police and prison officials convicted of gross abuses of their powers; or they were the subject of interpellations in the Duma, and were not contradicted by the Ministry; or they were reported in the moderate papers of the Russian daily Press, with a full specification of names and dates, notwithstanding all the rigours of censorship, and were not contradicted either by the official "Information Bureau" or the official and semi-official organs of the Press. Any evidence which, although substantially correct, might have been suspected of exaggeration, has been carefully excluded.

There is no question that the movement of the years 1905-1907 has produced a deep change in the whole aspect of thought and sentiment in Russia. The peasant, the workman, the clerk, the small tradesman are no longer so submissive to every rural police officer as they

formerly were. New ideas, new aspirations, new hopes, and, above all, a new interest in public life have been developed in them, since it was officially declared in October, 1905, that the nation would henceforward have the right to express its wishes and to exercise legislative power through its representatives, and that the policy of the Government would be a liberal policy. But, after it had been solemnly declared that the political life of the country was to be reconstructed on new principles, and that, to use the very words of the Tsar's Manifesto, "the population is to be given the inviolable foundation of civil rights, based on the actual inviolability of the person, and freedom of belief, of speech, of organisation, and meeting "--after that declaration had been solemnly promulgated, those who tried to realise these principles have been treated as rebels, guilty of high treason.

Not only are the representatives of the advanced parties prosecuted for all they said and did during the years 1906-1907, but even the most moderate party, the Ocobrists, who take their standpoint on the letter of the October manifesto, are treated by the officials, high and low, of M. Stolypin's Government as preaching treasonable doctrines. The only political party which has hitherto received the Tsar's personal approval, and is recognised by him as loyal, is the Union of the Russian Men; but, as it now appears from revelations which have at last reached the Law Courts, this party has not only taken a lively part in the

organisation of pogroms against the Jews, and the "intellectuals" in general, but its President is now indicted before a Criminal Court on the charge of instigating and paying for the murder of Herzenstein, a member of the First Duma, who was considered as the best financial authority in matters concerning the peasants. He is similarly charged with complicity in the murder of M. Yollos, another respected member of the same Duma, also an authority on matters affecting the peasantry.¹

As regards the present Ministry, it has declared itself during recent debates in the Duma incapable of governing the country without maintaining the state of siege over portions of Russia. This system, however, has lately been so much extended that at this moment nearly two-thirds of the provinces of the Russian Empire have been placed under the rule of specially nominated Governors-General, who have been given almost dictatorial powers, including the right of putting people to death without trial, and without even sending them before a Court Martial. This unheard-of right was confirmed lately by a decision of the First Department of the Senate, which has recognised that in the provinces where a state of siege has been declared such a power of life and death without trial was actually conferred upon the Governors-General by the decree of the Tsar ordaining the rules to be followed during a state of siege.

At the same time it is the policy of the present Government to institute prosecutions against all those who, during the years 1905-1907, taking the words of the Imperial Manifesto in their proper sense, had acted in conformity with those words, considering that the nation had been really granted political rights. The publishers of books, which were issued in those years by the hundred and which at that time were held to have satisfied the rules of censorship, are now prosecuted on the ground of having committed breaches of the law and are condemned to one and two years' imprisonment in a fortress. Organisers of meetings and speakers who were expressing ideas absolutely lawful from a constitutional point of view are now prosecuted as revolutionists. Organisers of armed resistance against pogroms (Jew-baiting) are now treated as revolutionists of the worst description, and an uninterrupted succession of trials is directed against men of peaceful life for what is now described as a breach of the law, but was quite constitutional two years ago. In fact, it may be said, as it is said in the Press of Russia itself, that these prosecutions can be described only as the revenge of bureaucracy for all that was said during those months against its misrule. These prosecutions, of which a few examples will be given in this statement, are increasing so fast in number that it is feared that all liberal-minded men in Russia, however moderate their opinions, will in turn be arraigned before military and other

exceptional Courts if the present régime continues.

Another feature of the present state of things is the large number of prosecutions which are a direct result of the work of agents provocateurs like the well-known Azeff. Much prominence was lately given to the Azeff affair, and it was indeed a remarkable discovery that a man who had taken most active part in the organisation of the murder of the Minister of the Interior, Von Plehve, in July, 1904, of the Grand Duke Sergius in 1905, and of General Bogdanovitch at Ufa, had organised all these plots with the knowledge and partly with the money of the Russian secret police, or at least of that part of that police which has for its special mission the Okhrana ("Protection") of the Emperor himself. But the Azeff scandals are only the most striking of many other scandals which have been lately discovered. Indeed, it has been proved by the materials brought before the First Duma by Prince Ouroussoff that quite a number of agents provocateurs were in 1905-1906 organising pogroms of the Jews, the killing of the intellectuals in Tomsk and in Tver, the plots against the Governors of the different provinces, and so-called "expropriations"--that is, extorting money under menace of death. For these purposes the agents of the police imported from abroad large quantities of revolutionary literature (as has been proved in the case of Azeff), and also arms and explosives; or else they organised the

manufacture of bombs within Russia itself, sometimes with money granted by the head of the Police Department, as was revealed in the Lopukhin case.

The policy of the Government of M. Stolypin having been for the last two years to wreak vengeance on those who took any active part in the liberation movement that followed the Manifesto of October 30, 1905, it is easy to conceive what masses of people have been arrested, brought before the Courts, transported to Siberia, or exiled to different parts of the Empire by simple administrative orders. The result is, that the prisons of Russia are so overcrowded at the present moment that they contain, according to official statements, something like 181,000 prisoners, although the utmost capacity for which they were designed is only 107,000. But as there are several provinces in which the arrests were especially numerous, we learn from the official statements made in the Duma during the discussion on the Prisons Budget, that there are lock-ups and transfer prisons in which the number of prisoners is three to four times as great as their holding capacity. The consequence of this overcrowding is that the prison administration finds it absolutely impossible to supply to their inmates even the small degree of sanitary accommodation which is ordained by law. Typhus has spread in alarming proportions in the prisons of the Empire, and its presence has already declared itself in 65 provinces out of 100.

In most of these overcrowded prisons the inmates have absolutely no beds or bedding; and in many not even the wooden platforms along the walls which were formerly used. They sleep on the bare floor without any covering or bedding but the old, worn-out clothing, literally full of vermin, which is delivered to them by the prison administration. Under such conditions it is impossible to speak of any sanitary arrangements. The sufferers from typhus and scurvy lie side by side with the other prisoners, and it is only when prisoner is in a dying condition that he is removed to some hospital. Cases are known of typhoid patients being brought on stretchers before the Court and sent back by the judges. A man was hanged while suffering from typhus, and having a temperature of 104°.

All this leads necessarily to acts of rebellion among the prisoners, which in their turn lead to repression in the most abominable form, and to wholesale shootings. Brutality of the worst kind has become quite habitual in all the lock-ups, and appalling facts will be found in the documents which I produce further on. Even men who are condemned to be executed are horribly beaten before they are taken to the scaffold, so that in one of the Moscow Courts Martial a man, condemned to be hanged, had to apply to President of the Court for his promise that he should not be beaten to death before execution. The promise in this case was kept, but as a rule the tortures to

which men condemned to death are submitted before the execution takes place are so horrible that in a considerable and steadily growing number of cases of suicide the men who were ready to face death calmly could not face the tortures that preceded it. As to the number of death sentences pronounced by the Military Courts and the executions, they are not on the decrease, as M. Stolypin informed Mr. W. T. Stead in July, 1908. They remain stationary, although there is a decided diminution in the number of acts of violence committed by the revolutionists, and in crime altogether (see Chapter III.).

Last summer a discussion took place in the Times with regard to the number of exiles transported to different parts of the Empire by Administrative Order, and it was stated by one of the refugees in London that, contrary to M. Stolypin's affirmation that their number did not exceed 12,000, there were no less than 78,000 prisoners under those conditions. The Duma lately called on the Department of Police to supply exact figures, and the figures given by the Department were 74,000. The state of these exiles is even more dreadful than has been described in the English Press. It is exaggeration to say that in certain parts of North-Eastern Siberia the position of the exiles is simply desperate, and it is not to be wondered at that acts of rebellion, such as were lately heard of in Turukhansk, should take place.

In short, if the present conditions had to be described in a few words, it might be said that while the agricultural population and the workmen in the towns have been raised to a certain conception of individual self-respect, and while aspirations towards a more human treatment and increased liberty have spread far and wide over the country, we find, on the other hand, among the bureaucracy, high and low, and among its inferior agents in the villages, a real spirit of hatred and cruel revenge against the slightest manifestation of love for freedom, the result being that the relations between the population and the ruling classes have become extremely strained all over Russia. At the same time large numbers are being driven to despair by the arbitrary acts of the lower agents of the Government in the villages and in the small provincial towns. There is at the present time a scarcity of grain in many provinces of European Russia and Siberia, and even famine prevails; but the Government has ordered all the arrears in the payment of taxes and in repayment of previous famine loans to be levied at once, and this is done now, notwithstanding the famine, with a severity which has long been unknown. For the smallest arrears of a few shillings the property of peasant families is sold at auctions, at which the police authorities are the only bidders; cattle, horses, and even the stores of grain and the coming crops are thus sold for a few shillings to some village police official, who afterwards sells them back to the ruined

peasant for three or four times the price he has paid.

Moreover, it is estimated that there are now at least something like 700,000 peasants and working men in European Russia alone who have been thrown out of their regular mode of life during the last two years, in consequence of repression after strikes and the like, and who at the present time are mere outlaws wandering from one city to another, compelled to conceal themselves under false names, and without any possibility of returning to their native places and to their previous occupations. There are nearly three-quarters of a million persons whom only a general amnesty would permit to return to regular life and regular earnings.

Such is the condition of Russia, as every one may ascertain for himself from the numerous documents out of which abstracts are given in the following pages.

Earnest appeal is therefore made to all those to whom human progress is dear to use all the weight of their influence to put an end to this reign of White Terror under which that country now lies. It is well known from history that the White Terror such as was seen in the twenties the last century in France after the return of the Bourbons, in Italy before 1859, and later on in Turkey, has never restored tranquillity in a country. It only paves the way for new disturbances, it spreads in the country

a feeling of utter contempt for human life, it induces habits of violence, and beyond question it would be to the interest of humanity as a whole, and of progress in general, that the state of affairs which now prevails in Russia should be brought to an end.

Footnotes

1Interpellation addressed on April 23, 1909, to the Ministry, by the Constitutional Democratic Party.

PART I

CHAPTER I THE PRISONS

A.--OVERCROWDING AND TYPHUS

Numbers of Prisoners. Overcrowding.--From an official document communicated to the State Council on March 15, 1909, by the administration of the prisons, it appears that on February 1, 1909, there were in the lock-ups of the Empire 181,137 inmates. This figure, however, does not include those prisoners who are in transportation, and the numbers of whom are estimated officially at about 30,000. Nor does it include an immense number of persons detained at the police lock-ups, both in the towns and in the villages. No approximate idea as to the number of this last category can be obtained, but it has been suggested in the Russian Press that it may be anything between 50,000 and 100,000. The worst is that it is especially in the Police lock-ups that the ill-treatment of the prisoners is the most awful. The famous torture chambers of Grinn at Warsaw, and Gregus at Riga (both condemned by courts) were precisely police lock-ups.

The number of inmates in the prisons has been growing steadily for the last four years. In 1905 the average daily figure for all the prisons of the Empire was 85,000 ; it reached 111,000 in 1906 ; 138,000 in 1907 ; 170,000 in 1908, and on February 1, 1909, it was

181,137. The holding capacity of all the prisons of the Empire being only 107,000 persons, overcrowding is the necessary result, and in some places there are from three to four times more inmates than the prison could possibly contain under normal conditions. The result of this overcrowding is that scurvy and typhus have developed in an alarming proportion, and that, as has been said in the Introduction, nothing is done to prevent the epidemic from spreading over all the prisons of Russia. Unfortunately, it must also be said that the leniency with which countless complaints about brutal treatment in prisons has been met by the Ministry, and the continual release, by personal orders of the Emperor, of those prison officials who have been condemned by the Russian Courts to imprisonment for the brutal treatment of the prisoners, seem to have created among the prison authorities the idea that in tormenting the prisoners they act in accordance with the wishes of the Government. The Ministry of the Interior, as seen from the debates in the Duma, is fully aware, through the official reports addressed to it by the prison governors, of the terrible overcrowding in some of the lock-ups and of the resulting epidemics. But it takes no measures to prevent either the overcrowding or the spread of these epidemics among the prisoners.

Even in the great prisons like the Butyrki prison of Moscow, within a few hours of the Ministry of the Interior, even in this prison we

are informed by the members of the Duma who have served their time in it, the dress and the linen delivered to the prisoners are falling to pieces ; even in the pillows, which are filled with straw, the straw is changed only once a year. No mattresses are delivered, not even pieces of felt to lie upon, and no blankets ; fresh new linen is delivered only when the visit of a member of the superior administration is expected.¹

In this prison, which contains 1,300 hard-labour convicts, one-half of whom are politicals, the rooms, which are each twelve paces long by five wide, contain twenty-five prisoners, and the time allowed for taking fresh air is only minutes. Out of the inmates placed on the sick list, 65 percent. are attacked by scurvy ; they remain in the common rooms, all in chains, and are continually beaten and thrashed by the warders. After having beaten a man they will put him into the Black Hole; and the deputies of the Duma imprisoned in this place write about a man Chertetsoff, who, after being beaten for seven days in succession, went mad and died three days later.²

The same prison has become such a nest of infection that at a special meeting of the Committee of the Sanitary Inspectors of Moscow on the 2nd of March, 1909, it was stated that during the week, from the 15th to the 20th of February, no less than 70 men were taken ill with recurrent typhus. The

illness has been spread to the barracks of the sappers by the men who kept guard in the prison, and ten deaths have already taken place there. The Committee concluded that it was absolutely necessary to improve the food of the prisoners ; but this is precisely what the prison authorities will not admit.

The lock-up of the First Don District (province of Don Cossacks) was built for 50 inmates-it contains 205 ; a room, 14 feet long, 10 feet wide, and 8 feet high, with only two windows, contains 26 prisoners. In the Kostroma prison, which was built for 200 persons, there are 400 prisoners. Each prisoner has, as a rule, less than 170 cubic feet of air space, and the allowance has never attained 240 cubic feet (which would mean 3 feet by 8 feet in a room 10 feet high. The rooms are full of parasites. In the Kamenetz prison, built for 400 persons, there are 800 inmates. Each room, calculated for 20 persons, contains 40.

From the Vyatka Transfer prison, one of the chief transfer prisons on the highway to Siberia, a prisoner writes as follows:--

"We are kept, from 60 to 70 of us, in rooms calculated to hold 30 to 40 persons only. There are no beds, not even those sleeping platforms which formerly were used instead of beds in Russian prisons. We all sleep on the bare floor, and no blankets are supplied. The damp is awful, and the rooms are full of parasites. The politicals are kept together with the common

law convicts. The food [which is described in full] is execrable. All meals are served within the space of four hours, and for 20 hours we remain without food, shut up in our rooms, with windows tightly fastened, and are not allowed to go out of our rooms for any reason whatever."³

At the Ekaterinodar prison in the Caucasus, as has been stated by the town authorities at a meeting held on the 5th of April last, there is room for 360 prisoners ; but the gaol contains 1,200 inmates, out of whom 500 are ill with eruptive typhus. The hospital accommodation is for 80 persons only, the remainder continue to lie with the others in the common rooms. The governor of the prison also fell ill with eruptive typhus.⁴

With regard to the Tiflis central prison in the Mehteh Castle, 403 political and common law prisoners detained there have lately written to the Duma deputy, M. Tcheidze, in the name of 840 inmates of that terrible fortress, complaining of the most abominable sanitary conditions and the unlimited brutality of the prison authorities. Four men been shot during the last month by the sentinels for having approached the windows, the order issued by the commander of the castle in January last being : "Shoot without any warning at the slightest uproar, and as soon as a prisoner approaches the window aim at the head so as to occasion death."⁵

Last year it became known that several prisons were nests of typhus infection. Thus the Ekaterinoslav zemstvo repo that the Lugansk prison was a breeding-place of typhus for the city and the whole district. In the Kieff prison, which was built for 500 inmates but contains 2,000, the typhus epidemic began already in 1908, and soon in this old building, renowned for its typhus epidemics since 1882, hundreds of men were laid down with typhus. The infirmary, which has accommodation for 95 persons only, contained 339 sick prisoners, the average space which the patients were enjoying being only 210 cubic feet per person (3 feet by 7 feet by 10 feet). The mortality was appalling. From the prison the epidemic spread to the city of Kieff, with the result that the official figures for Kieff for the year 1908 were 9,150 cases of typhus, out of which 2,188 were in the prison.⁶

The head of the prison administration, M. Hrulleff, having sent his special commissioner, M. Von Bötticher, to report about the condition of the prisons in the provinces of Kieff, Podolia, and Volhynia, the Commissioner has now sent in a report concerning the Lukoyanoff prison of the province of Kieff. Nearly 2,500 prisoners have died from typhus alone in this old prison--about five hundred every year. In January last there were 222 typhus cases in this prison and 423 in February.⁷ The great development of typhus is due to over-crowding, the prison, which has

been built for 600 inmates, containing regularly 1,800.⁸

During last winter the epidemic appeared almost everywhere. In Pyatigorsk it appeared in January ; in Perm in February. It was eruptive typhus, and the chief doctor of the zemstvo infirmary, M. Vinográdoff, died on February 2nd, after having been infected while he received in the infirmary 18 typhus patients brought from the local prison.⁹ In February 70 persons had already died, but the prison administration, as the ex-member of the Duma, M. Polétaeff, writes to the St. Petersburg papers, refused even to permit the prisoners to improve their food at their own expense.¹⁰ Many soldiers and warders were infected in their turn, and another prison doctor, Pilipin, and two warders, as also several soldiers of the military garrison, died from typhus.

In the government of Ekaterinoslav the prisons of Lugan and Bakhmut (a prison which was built for 50 persons, but had 350 inmates) soon were infected. In a few weeks the number of typhus patients in this last prison reached 54, and 100 a few days later.¹¹ In the capital of the province, at Ekaterinoslav, where 1,317 persons were kept in a building that had been built for 300 inmates, typhus was raging. There were 130 patients in February, 235 in March. There appeared also cholera, which was due to the rotten food distributed to the prisoners and to contaminated water.¹²

In Poltava typhus has raged since November last, and continues still. In the province of Kursk the typhus epidemic broke out in seven different gaols ; in the provincial prison all sick continued to be kept in chains, and they were transported in this way to the zemstvo infirmary ; 16 warders all fell ill. In Simpheropol there were in February 86 cases of recurrent typhus and 3 of eruptive typhus ; in March there were 200 cases, and the epidemic showed no signs of abatement.

The same ravages were apparent in the prisons of Kherson, Zenkoff, Radomysl, Berdichef, and several other towns of South-West Russia.¹³

The same in Warsaw (where the prison of the Praga suburb was built for 150 inmates but contained 400 and all the prisoners slept on the bare floor),¹⁴ at Minsk, in Vyazma, government of Smolensk, where 37 prisoners out of 139 and 3 warders out of 10 were stricken by typhus.¹⁵

Orel, Nijni-Novgorod, Totma, &c., &c., are now in the same condition, and finally in the great Butyrki prison of Moscow there were 70 new typhus cases during one week, from February 22nd to March 1st. Only later in March an abatement of the epidemic was reported.¹⁶

At Simpheropol 30 typhus patients are reported; in the children's reformatory of Ekaterinoslav, 14 boys out of 19 are stricken

with typhus. At the Uman and Berdichef gaols, no more prisoners are received on account of the terrible epidemic which is raging in these prisons.¹⁷

The relatives of the political inmates of the Perm prison wrote to the Duma deputy of that province, asking him to do something for them. The prison administration does not allow any additional food to be given to the typhus patients.

There are three cases on record--two of them at Kharkoff and one at Ekaterinoslav--of persons ill with typhus who have been brought before the Courts during their illness. Thus, in the first days of April last, two men accused of robbery were brought before the Court Martial of Kharkoff. Seeing that one of them was quite unable to answer the questions, having not yet recovered from a second attack of recurrent typhus--he was looking like a corpse--the President of the Court asked the Prosecutor to postpone the prosecution, and added : "There is no need to call a doctor ; you have only to look yourself at that man." The Public Prosecutor, after having approached the prisoner, withdrew his accusation, and the man was returned to the prison.¹⁸

On February 26th the Court Martial, sitting at Ekaterinoslav, was also compelled to interrupt its sitting because one of the lawyers drew the attention of the Court to the fact that one of the prisoners brought before them was ill with

typhus. A doctor was called in, the temperature of the prisoner was 104°, and he was returned to the prison.

In St. Petersburg it happened in the beginning of March last, that when a party Of 75 prisoners was brought by rail to this city, several of them were ill with typhus. They were sent to the transfer prison, but there being no room to receive the new-comers, they had to lie all the night on the floor in the passages.¹⁹ Equally bad accounts are given of the typhus epidemic in the Kursk, Penza, Tver, Tchembar, and several other prisons. In this last prison the typhus patients were kept together with all the others in the common rooms. The prison doctor, M. Jimsen, died from typhus.²⁰

Private persons and societies for the aid of prisoners are prevented from doing anything to improve the food of the prisoners, and according to the paper Novaya Russ, the Minister of Justice has forbidden the prison authorities to give any information concerning the health of their inmates.

Mode of Transfer of Typhus Patients to an Infirmary.--The following statement, made by a lady in Central Russia and published in the Review Russkoye Bogatstvo, edited by Korolenko, is typical :--

"Last summer we were occasionally in the yard of the infirmary of our zemstvo. I saw two

carts entering the yard, accompanied by soldiers. Approaching these carts, I saw that they contained typhoid patients who had been brought to the infirmary from the prison. It was a dreadful sight, and made my hair stand on end. One can hardly believe that in the twentieth century, with our present civilisation, men could be treated in such a way and brought in such a condition. The men, all unconscious, laid like logs in the cart, knocking their heads against its wooden frame. They had not even put a handful of straw under their heads. The men were lying almost one upon the other. Some were in the last agony ; two of them died an hour or one and a half hours later. All of them were in chains. I saw how the two dead were carried to the chapel--both were fettered. I asked why the chains had not been taken from the dead; it would have been done if they were dogs. They replied that the chains can be taken off only after the death certificate has been signed by the prison doctor. Later on I learned that the typhus patients were kept in the very same room with the others. In our infirmary special rooms were prepared for the typhus prisoners, and warders were brought from the prison to watch them. Accustomed continually to beat the prisoners, these warders began to do the same in the infirmary, so that the zemstvo authorities had to interfere, but, I am afraid, in vain ; they continued to do on a small scale what they had been used to do on a large scale in the prison."21

Footnotes

- 1Ryech, January 24, 1909.
- 2Sovremennoye Slovo, January 30, 1909.
- 3Long letter from one of the inmates in Russkoye Bogatstvo, April, 1909, pp. 89-90.
- 4Meeting of the Prison Committee of Ekaterinodar, April 5, 1909, reported in Ryech.
- 5Russkiya Vedomosti, February, 1909.--As might have been foreseen, the above conditions ended in a tragedy. A Tiflis telegram to the Russian dailies says that on May 22nd, at 6.30 p.m., as several prisoners, condemned to be executed, were taken to the scaffold, the other prisoners became uproarious. "There are five killed among them," laconically adds the telegram.
- 6See the St. Petersburg dailies for January 30, 1909.
- 7Kievskiy Vestnik, March 12, 1909.
- 8Novaya Russ, May 21, 1909.
- 9Ryech, February 4, 1909.
- 10Russkiya Vedomosti, February 25, 1909.
- 11Ryech, January 17, February 14, 1909.
- 12Ibid., January 27, February 22, 25, and 26, March 7 and 13, 1909.
- 13Kievskiy Vestnik, February 22 March 3, 4, 9, 12, 1909.
- 14Warsaw Echo, reproduced in Ryech, February 19, 1909.
- 15See St. Petersburg papers for March 22nd.
- 16Russkiya Véd., March 1, 22, April 8, 1909.
- 17This information is taken from the daily telegrams communicated to the St. Petersburg papers during the months of March and April, 1909.
- 18Ryech, April, 1909.
- 19Ryech, March 4, 1909.
- 20Russ. Véd., March 4 1909 (signed article).
- 21 Russkoye Bogatstvo, April, 1909, pp. 90, 91.

B.--ILL-TREATMENT AND TORTURES

Many pages could be covered with the description of the ill-treatment and the tortures in different prisons of Russia. Only some striking instances, however, can be mentioned here.

It is known through the daily Press that there were so many complaints about the misrule of the head of the Moscow police, General Rheinbot, that a special Commission was sent out by the Senate, under Senator Garin, to inquire into the affair. The head of the police just mentioned has been dismissed ; perhaps he will be brought before a Court, and striking instances arising out of his misrule have already been communicated more or less officially to the daily Press.¹ Thus, one of the witnesses, M. Maximoff, examined by the Commission, who had been kept in one of the lock-ups the Moscow police, deposed as follows:--

"Here I saw the most brutal treatment of the arrested people. The policemen used to beat those whom they would arrest as much as they liked....It was terrible to live there day by day, and to think that either I would be killed too, or I myself would perhaps become a murderer in resisting these men....They used to beat people in an awful way, sometimes quite innocent men, such, for instance, as an official of the Institution of the Empress Marie, Andrei Gavrilovitch Surkoff. He refused to enter a

dark room where they wanted to put him, so they began to beat him with the butt-ends of their rifles, on the head, in the stomach,...everywhere. Finally, he grew wild and seized the nose of the secret agent, Orloff, with his teeth. Only then did they stop. It was then ten o'clock, and at midnight he had been sent to lunatic asylum, and as far as I know he is quite mad by this time."

The names of the agents of the secret police who used thus to treat prisoners are given in full by the witness. The same witness describes a most terrible case of a woman who was arrested on suspicion of robbery ; she would not declare herself guilty.

"The agent of the secret police, Lyndin, was examining a young woman suspected of robbery. She explained how she and the watchman were tied by the robbers. Lyndin did not believe her, and began to beat her with his fists in the breast, so that blood flowed from her mouth, and she fell in a swoon ; a few hours later she had a terrible internal hæmorrhage. We saw that beating and we could not stand it. I shouted to Lyndin: 'Scoundrel that you are why do you kill a human being?' Whereupon he took out his revolver and threatened to shoot me, but I and another prisoner began to break the partition which separated us. Then they stopped the beating. Three days later they arrested the real robbers, and it was discovered that the woman was absolutely innocent."

It is very seldom that such facts are brought before the Courts. Still it happens occasionally, and then the most scandalous state of affairs is sometimes revealed. Thus in Alexandria, government of Kherson, the present head of the Investigation Department of the police of this district, a certain Tchernyavsky, while he was not yet promoted to that post and was a simple police officer, aided by several prisoners whom he had trained to be his executioners, actually tortured the common law prisoners under arrest. At last the fact leaked out, and the governor of the province ordered an inquiry to be held, whereupon a long succession of witnesses came to testify that they had been fearfully beaten in prison while they were under arrest, and not only beaten, but their hair was pulled out, wounds were inflicted by sharp needles, even the fire torture was resorted to. A medical examination of these witnesses fully confirmed the fact that several of them had broken ribs, broken tympanums, and other serious wounds. However, Tchernyavsky was not dismissed from prison service ; he was only transferred to the political Investigation Department. The inquiry, however, is continuing, and there is a vague hope that this time the affair may not be hushed up.²

In March, 1909, in the city of Dvinsk, the police official Leiko and two of his subordinates were prosecuted for tortures

practised at the police-station.³ But the prosecutions are of no use, as all these torturers know well that they have the full approval of the Union of Russian Men, and as soon as this Union applies to the Tsar, asking him to pardon them, they will be pardoned.

At Vorónezh, on March 5th last, the prisoner Katasánoff, who had been brought to the psychial hospital of the zemstvo, died from wounds inflicted upon him by the local prison administration.⁴

Tortures are so habitual in the Ekaterinosláv prison that according to the testimony of M. Antónoff, who was kept in that prison and has related his experiences in the St. Petersburg newspaper Rych, November 21, 1908, "beating and thrashing of the prisoners was continued even upon those who were to be executed in a few days. Thus, the prisoner Gutmacher was beaten with sticks and thrown on the floor, and kicked by the warders down to the very day when he was hanged." This is so habitual that the ex-deputy of the Second Duma, M. Lomtadze, in a letter which he wrote to the members of the present Duma and which was reproduced by all the Russian newspapers, communicated following fact:--

"Such treatment," he wrote, "has become so habitual that one anarchist-communist, Sinkóff, having been condemned to death, applied to the President of the Court Martial, asking him to co communicate with the

respective prison authorities to ensure that he, Sinkóff, should not be beaten before being hanged, and he promised, in his turn, to march to the scaffold without saying a word, a without bidding his last farewell to the other prisoners. The President of the Court Martial promised to do so, and I think kept his word."5

The daily Russian papers having mentioned several cases of ill-treatment of the prisoners, especially in the Algachí and Akatúi prisons of Eastern Siberia, as also the ill-treatment of prisoners in the Schlüssellburg, where they are kept in chains, even in those cases in which this is contrary to law, and the cold in the cells is so intense that the prisoners cannot sleep otherwise than in their sheepskins, the head of the prison administration, M. Khruleff, has lately issued a circular, in which he forbids the prison authorities to treat the prisoners brutally, as they are doing; but this circular will evidently remain a dead letter. In the meantime the prisoners are resorting to the only means of protest which they have at their disposal, that is, the famine strike, which consists refusing to take any food. Such a strike took place in April last at the St. Petersburg House of Correction, where six hundred prisoners refused all food for a number of days, and in Kresty prison, also at St. Petersburg.

In Tobolsk, on March 18, 1908, thirteen prisoners were hanged for an "insurrection." The head of the military guard, however, told

the Court that there was absolutely no insurrection whatever, and that, if he had been allowed to do so, he would have taken all the prisoners to the punishment cells without the slightest resistance on their part; but the warders jumped upon them, using their rifles and shooting them down. This was the cause of the scuffle which followed, and for which thirteen men have been executed.

One of the most scandalous affairs took place in the Astrakhan prison; it has been brought before a Court, and therefore its details have become known. The governor of that prison was a certain Schéffer. One of the prisoners, Iv 'noff, was killed by the warders. The prison doctor gave a testimony of natural death, and the man was buried. However, Schéffer's assistant, M. Pribylovsky, protested, and intended to bring the affair before a Court. The result was that he was found killed on March 9th last in a street of Astrakhan. Then the assistant of the head of the police, a certain Yermakóff, a friend of the man killed, began a prosecution for this last murder; it so happened that he had seen the assassins, and when he came to the office of the head of the police, Rakhmáninoff, he discovered in one of the agents of Rakhmáninoff (the agent appointed to watch the revolutionary socialists) the assassin of Schéffer's assistant. He wanted to arrest him, but Rakhmáninoff made the man disappear. Shortly after that another agent of Rakhmáninoff burned himself in a cell, and Rakhmáninoff himself was found

dead in the lodgings of the governor of the province. This mysterious affair was told at full length in a signed article in the newspaper Ryeck, April 19, 1909.

"Every moment we expect some terrible scene of wholesale beating to break out, and we continually have poison in readiness," one of the inmates of a great prison in Siberia writes to her friends.

Last April all those thirteen prisoners who had been condemned to death at the Alexandrovsk prison of the government of Irkutsk, shared in equal parts the poison which they had obtained, in order to swallow it the moment the death sentences would have been confirmed by the Governor-General.

In March last, in the Kursk prison, out of three persons condemned to death, one vainly tried to kill his two other comrades, and finally succeeded in killing himself.⁶

In the Tambof prison, when the Court Martial was sitting last March, and continually pronounced death sentences, there were five attempts at suicide in the prison. Two of them were successful.⁷

All these facts have received a wide publicity in the Russian Press, and through the interpellations in the Duma, as also during the discussions which took place in the Duma when the Prison Budget was under discussion.

Thus on March 16, 1909, when the official figures about the overcrowding of the prisons were received by the Duma, it became evident that the sudden increase of the prison population during the last three years was the reason why an epidemic of typhus is now raging in almost every Russian prison, and almost every town. The Director of the Russian Prison Department admitted in the Duma the fact of the existence of typhus epidemics as well as cases of ill-treatment. He added, however, that his Department is energetically combating these evils. But nevertheless the overcrowding of prisons continues.

"The prison population," said the Deputy Gherasimoff at the sitting of March 22, 1909, "has increased during the last year alone by 100,000 persons." With regard to the treatment during the Duma debates of the prisoners, it was mentioned how often the political prisoners were beaten by the warders. In the Vladimir prison five "politicals" were flogged. In the Ekaterinoslav prison the above-mentioned fact about the ill-treatment of Gutmacher, who was tortured after being condemned to death, and beaten with sticks before the execution took place, was confirmed in the Duma. Not only men but women, not excluding invalids, are beaten in the prisons. In the Kostroma prison, the prisoner Phillipof, for having thrown some crumbs out of the window, was put in a strait-waistcoat and beaten to death. "Our prisons," concluded the

Deputy Gherasimov, "are places where humanity is outraged, and where crime is born and bred."

Finally, on April 7 (20), 1909, after having received from the Sevastopol prison a long letter from the Duma Deputy, Lomtadze, in which he described in what a terrible way men were executed day after day under his very windows, and after having reproduced this letter in full in their interpellation the Social Democratic section of the Duma addressed to the Prime Minister the following questions:--

"Is it known to the President of the Council of the Ministers—

"(1) That in the Sevastopol prison those who are condemned to death are systematically submitted to beating and all sorts of tortures before the death sentence is executed?

"(2) That executions take place even when the condemned man is unconscious, as was the case with a certain Vogt, who was ill with typhus and had a temperature of 40 degrees Centigrade (104 degrees Fahrenheit)?

"(3) That these abominations take place under the very windows of the infirmary, which renders still worse the condition of prisoners under treatment?

"And if this is known, what measures does the President of the Council intend to take to put

an end to such cases and to prosecute the guilty persons?"⁸

The letter of the Duma Deputy Lomtadze, having been translated in full in the Daily News of April 13, 1909, it suffices to mention only the following facts:--

During less than one year (the past year) 70 persons were executed in the prison hospital yard within five yards of his window (one of the hospital windows). The scaffold is clearly seen from the hospital. There are now awaiting execution, 15 condemned prisoners, and 90 awaiting sentence.

The prisoners are continually beaten till they are half unconscious, and are often executed in this state.

A certain prisoner named Vogt, though he was ill with typhoid, was taken from his bed and dragged to execution while in a delirious state. M. Lomtadze adds: "Perhaps this was better, but on me this execution has produced the deepest impression of all."

The soldiers have been ordered to shoot at the prisoners as soon as there is any noise in the cells, and as the cries of those who are being beaten and pinioned prior to execution are heard, it is inevitable that the other prisoners should cry out, or even call "Farewell" to those

comrades who are being dragged to the scaffold.⁹

On May 16, 1909, the Social Democrat section brought once more the wide question of prisons before the Duma.¹⁰

Even as they are reported in the papers it would be too long to quote here the debates in full. Therefore, only a few of the main facts are stated, each of which has been carefully verified before being brought before the Duma.

All the cases already stated before the Duma, when questions were put regarding the Ekaterinoslav and Sebastopol prisons--said the Social Democratic Deputy--go to prove that there we have to deal "with a carefully organised system of political revenge on a limited circle of persons."

In the Orel county prison the physical ill-treatment of prisoners began in the end of 1907, and during 1908 it acquired the aspect of an organised system.

The prisoners are here beaten terribly, till a state of unconsciousness supervenes, and they are half dead. In December, 1907, the assistant of the prison governor--a certain Levitsky--when receiving a prisoner, announced: "We have been given a free hand, do you understand? We will go scot-free. If I choose I can shoot you like a dog...!" During

1907 the prisoners were continually beaten. The same continued during the past year.

A prisoner who petitioned the governor Tchijov, in the name of other prisoners, for some small thing, was taken to a special cell and beaten in a horrible way in the presence of the chief warder. He was beaten by a warder and by the head of the hospital. In his own cell he was again beaten by a warder.

Last year in May a note was found and this was attributed (not proved) to a certain prisoner Akoutin. He was then put in irons--hands and feet--and taken to the "light" cell No. 2 (where prisoners are beaten chiefly). A mad orgy of punishment took place. He was thrown senseless on the asphalt floor. Thence the warders were forced to take hi to the hospital ward, where in a few days he died.

A fourteen years' old boy was terribly beaten and put in irons by order of the governor. There was no reason for this, as the boy had just been brought from another prison.

The warders beat also the companion of the boy, with whom he had arrived, on the head till he was senseless, and then dragged him about the cell, playing football his senseless body. The first boy had to watch this. One of the chief warders became so lively at this game of football that the others, fearing he would kill the prisoner, called on him to desist.

In the Orel central hard-labour prison the prisoners were and are continually beaten. Latterly the cases of a Socialist Revolutionist Dyakoff and a Moscow lawyer Zhdanoff have come to light. The former was mercilessly beaten. Zhdanoff had handed in some petition for the procureur. He was called up to the procureur, who insulted him. When Zhdanoff returned to his cell, the beating began. He was beaten so terribly that the warders decided they had killed him. This was reported to the assistant of the governor. When the assistant arrived, he began to swear at the warders that they had "killed a prisoner without permission." Then they saw that the prisoner still breathed. He was taken to the hospital; when he had revived he was taken back to solitary confinement, where he is now and where he is being beaten every few days. The warders say openly, "You won't live long."

Prisoners are brought to this prison from other prisons for "correction"--rather for murder. Even the soldier-guards speak with horror and terror of what happens within these walls.

The procureur never visits the prison, and though the treatment of prisoners was brought to his knowledge through his Deputy, and the latter promised that a legal inquiry should be made, of course nothing has been done.

Evidence was then read to the Duma concerning the Tobolsk hard-labour prison. It is similar to the above.

In the Boutyrki prison in Moscow the prisoners are continually stripped and searched, the warders pushing their filthy hands into the prisoners' mouths. The cases of beating and the Black Hole punishment are endless. Here are a few cases:--

A prisoner was slow in taking off his cap to the governor's assistant. The assistant snatched off the cap and gave the prisoner a furious blow in the ribs. The warders constantly beat the prisoners.

One prisoner had his temple smashed by a blow given with a pair of handcuffs.

A sailor was so beaten in July, 1908, that he committed suicide.

Real tortures take place in the Black Hole and in the "secret" cells.

"Enter with a lamp into this cell," writes a prisoner, "and the black patches of coagulated blood will tell you what happens in the Black Hole."

Recently a prisoner, officially reported perfectly healthy previous to this, died three days after illtreatment in the Black Hole.

A prisoner, acknowledged insane, was terribly beaten and flogged.

One prisoner in the hospital struck a warder during a fit. He was strapped with leather thongs to his cot for seven days. These straps were neither removed nor loosened for one single moment for any need during seven days and seven nights. His right arm has now become paralysed.

Another prisoner was bound to his cot in a similar way in his cell for five days, during which time he was unconscious.

The sick and healthy are herded together.

Every day there are new cases of prisoners becoming mentally deranged.

The officials choose to consider most of these cases "shamming," and many such prisoners commit suicide.

Those prisoners who are violent are kept strapped in their cots for whole days, where they lie in a state of untold filth.

Sixty-five per cent. of the prisoners are suffering from scurvy, and their fetters cut into their swollen legs. The death-rate is enormous. The consumptives die in fetters in the crowded cells, with other prisoners looking on.

In Tiflis, in the fortress, the governor issued, in January of this year, the order that "any prisoner approaching a window is to be shot at without warning, and the head is to be aimed

at so that there may be no wounded." As the air is unbearable the prisoners inevitably approach the windows. This order is a sure way of getting rid of prisoners.

In one day one was killed and two wounded in the same cell.

On April 3rd a youth aged 20 was shot. This prisoner had been brought to Tiflis from Moscow in view of his serious state of health.

There are other numerous cases.

In Ekaterinoslav, the Duma Deputies said, there are 192 prisoners ill with typhoid, and the number is growing. There is one sanitary officer who nurses all these sick. The doctor visits them twice a week.

The death-rate is enormous; the typhoid patients remain fettered.

In Bachmut, a prison for 84, which now holds 350 inmates, there are 54 cases of typhus.

A similar communication was received from Pavlograd in April.

Communications have been received from Kieff and Moscow giving the numbers of typhoid and typhus cases (see above).

Founded on these facts, the Social Democratic Party presented a list of four questions in

which the above facts are put forward. We translate the fourth question:--

"4. Whether the above-mentioned facts are known to the President of the Council of Ministers, to the Ministers of Justice, of the Navy, and the Minister of War ; then what measures have been taken by them for the protection of the life and health of the prisoners; for the abolition of the tortures, beating, and murders now practised; for the prevention of the insulting and rough behaviour of the prison officials, and the various methods of injury and torture, and also of other unlawful actions and abuse of the powers given to prison officials, and the powers of supervision given to the procureur, and what has been done for the prosecution of guilty persons?"

In addition to all the above evidence I will give here facts taken from a detailed inquiry which was made in Russia on behalf of those interested in the condition of Administrative exiles in Siberia and Northern Russia. In many prisons and police lock-ups, when the prisoners were being questioned, guilty or innocent alike were treated with a violence that made even the innocent confess to crimes that sent them to the gallows. The prisons of the Baltic provinces and Poland were specially celebrated for this, but in many other places the same horrors were committed. Here are a few facts.¹¹

At Vilno, when the sessions of the Assize Courts commenced, twenty-six ordinary (not political) prisoners asked to see the Public Prosecutor, and informed him of the terrible torture they had undergone in the County prison.

The Deputy of the Duma--M. Kisileff--received information from twenty peasants from the Kozlóff district (government of Tambov) about the horrible treatment they had received in the Kozlóff prison. They were beaten with nagaikas and with rods of iron until they lost consciousness, then cold water was thrown over them, and when they regained consciousness the beating was recommenced.

In Ekaterinoslav, at a trial in a Court of justice, the following facts were attested to. The police, with their chief officer, Trousévitsh, burned the fingers of the prisoners and whipped the soles of their feet to force confession. Trousévitsh was condemned by the Court to one month's arrest, the three policemen to seven days' imprisonment, the others were acquitted.

In prison No. 1 of Tobolsk an underground passage, dug by the prisoners with a view of making their escape, was discovered. All the prisoners were put into chains, many were put into the punitive cells, and twelve "leaders" were transferred to other prisons. The prisoners began to protest, upon which the political prisoners, condemned to penal

servitude, were flogged. After that there was a strike in the prison and the authorities called in troops, by whom, on July 16th, one prisoner was killed, four wounded, and all the others severely injured.

In Novi Marghilan, on February 10, 1907, at a trial concerning an attack on the house of a rich moneylender and the theft of 50,000 roubles, the Court Martial condemned three men to death, six to hard labour, and six were acquitted. The trial was public, and it was proved that during the preliminary examination the prisoners had been tortured. One prisoner had kerosene poured over his back, which was set fire to. The burns were shown in Court. Another prisoner had finely cut up horse-hair forced into his interior organs.

The demoralising influence of the "state of siege" tells on the local administration. The prison authorities of Kazan thought of a new sort of torment; they tried to incite the common law prisoners to insult physically and morally the "political" women. But they did not succeed. On February 2, 1907, the common law prisoners demanded to see the Public Prosecutor, and requested him to draw up a protocol about the manner in which the authorities treated them and urged them on to harm the political female prisoners. It was stated in this protocol that the assistant director of the prison, Goremykin, and the chief inspector urged the men to violate the

political during their walks, for which rewards were promised.

However, it was above all at Riga that torture flourished. Here are two facts.¹² A woman--aged about 40--was arrested on the charge of having helped to conceal criminals. She was sent to the well-known agent of the police, Oger, and on her arrival thither she was immediately beaten with nagaikas and indiarubber sticks.¹³ A loaded revolver was forced into her mouth with the threat that she would killed on the spot if she did not point out the hiding-place of a person the police believed her to know. A police officer and two policemen tortured her.

The second fact, which was also mentioned in all the leading dailies, and was not contradicted, was the following: The head of the Secret Police, Gregus, his assistant, Mihéef, and two spies, Anton and Davos, were the chief torturers. Before commencing, Davos generally examined the prisoner's skin, and would remark, "It's all right, he can stand it." Sixteen anarchists were tried by Court Martial, and it appears that one of them, Grünning, had incurred the special hatred of the detectives. This youth of 23 had had all the hair pulled out of his head and beard, and several of his ribs were broken. With the butt of a revolver he had had his head broken and his face so disfigured that he was unrecognisable. After the torture he was unable to move, and two warders dragged him to his cell, and flung him

down by the door. His comrades raised him, brought him back to consciousness, and washed his wounds. His sufferings were terrible; he could neither sit nor lie. But notwithstanding all this Grünning did not give the information needed, and it was only thanks to this that his sentence was fifteen years hard labour, instead of a death penalty. This sentence was a great surprise to Grünning and his comrades. But Grünning was sent to a punitive battalion in Livonia, pending a new examination (after a judicial sentence!), and a week later it became known that he had been shot "by mistake." The second victim of the same torturers was Karl Legsdin (Kenin), who was sentenced to death by a Field Court Martial, and executed. During the examination he had had his toe-nails torn out, and certain of his organs so squeezed that right up to his execution he had internal hæmorrhage. This torture was invented by Mihéef, who was called "a brute" even by his executioner, Davos. The face and body of Legsdin were so frightfully bruised that he could neither sit nor lie, but had always to stand.¹⁴

This is what happened in Lodz. For having made an attack on the County Exchequer on May 30, 1906, four persons were sentenced in Warsaw to capital punishment, which was later altered to penal servitude. In all, thirteen persons were accused, and at the preliminary examination they had all pleaded guilty. At the trial it was proved that while they were in the Lodz prison they were tortured during several

days, they were beaten with nagaikas till in some places the flesh literally tore off in pieces ; when they lay helpless on the floor their tormentors jumped from chairs on to their bodies ; their heads were twisted round, their pulled out, their teeth broken. After several months the traces of this treatment were so evident that no denial possible. Under it all the thirteen prisoners pleaded guilty, but the Court would not take this confession into consideration and--having no proofs against them--it completely acquitted nine of them (Sovremennik, July 14, 1906, No. 73). The Novyi Put (May 8, 1906, No. 106), also stated that in a secret chamber in Lodz the politicals were tortured ; they were beaten till they became unconscious, their teeth were pulled out, their heads pressed by screws till the screws broke their bones, and so on. S. Sonnenstein, a youth of 18 ; Futterman, a boy of 15 ; and a young girl of 18, A. Wesen, were all tortured in this way.

Warsaw is also well known for its tortures, and the most important part there was played by a spy named Grinn. Here is one of many facts.¹⁵ The four working men, Setchka, Kempisky, Steblinsky, and Savitsky, having been brought before a Court Martial under the accusation of having murdered a certain Chaki, a clerk of the Secret Police Department in Warsaw, were all acquitted, because during the trial the prisoners declared before the Court that after their arrest they were tortured to such an extent that they confessed to a crime they had

not committed. The fact was confirmed by Doctor Falz, who had examined their bodies and found on them the traces of the tortures. It was Grinn who directed and ordered the tortures. A fifth prisoner went mad during his "examination," and is now in an asylum.

In March, 1908, the Governor of Bessarabia dismissed a police officer, Obnimsky, and the head of the district police in Soroki, Levitski, on account of the mysterious death of a village publican's nephew. This boy of 15 was accused of stealing 25 roubles from his uncle, and at the latter's request he was taken to Obnimsky's office, where Obnimsky, together with another man, questioned the boy. The boy died during this examination.¹⁶

Footnotes

1Long abstracts in Russkiya Vedomosti March 11, 1909.

2Ryech and other St. Petersburg papers, April 13, 1909.

3Novoye Vremya, February, 1909.

4St. Petersburg and Moscow dailies, March 6, 1909.

5Interpellation in the Duma of April 7-20, 1909.

6Russ. Véd., March 19, 1909.

7Ryech, March 23, 1909.

8Ryech, April 7, 1909.

9Since this letter appeared Lomtatidze has been deprived of his walks, his tea and sugar, &c. He is in very bad health, dying from consumption and insufficient nourishment, and he has now been placed in a tiny room with three other sick men, one of whom is ill with typhoid, one with consumption, and one in the very last stages of consumption.

10On the method of making an interpellation and its value as evidence see p. 56.

11See the St. Petersburg dailies: Novyi Put, September 27, 1906, No. 35; Tovarisch, April 12, 1907, No. 240 ; January 20, 1907, No. 170; and July 31, 1907, No. 332 ; Parus, March 13, 1907, No. 26; Russkoye Slovo, February 4, 1907, No. 27.

12Tovarisch, Ryech, &c., March 1, 1907, No. 204.

13Such sticks, fabricated on purpose, had been distributed to the prison warders. M. Stolypin, during an interpellation in the Duma, did not deny the fact of such sticks and other instruments of torture being kept in a special cupboard at a Riga police-station; but he described that collection as "a museum."

14What was done to a girl, arrested at the same time, has been described by the ex-agent Bakay in his Memoirs The facts were confirmed on many sides.

15Russkoye Slovo, May 27, 1907, No. 121. 16Ryech, March 7, 1908, No. 57.

CHAPTER II SUICIDES IN THE PRISONS

The ill-treatment of those who have been condemned to death--down to the very moment of the execution--and the terrible physical sufferings inflicted in the most barbarous way in the morning hours which precede the execution, and during the execution itself, have created quite epidemic of suicides in the prisons of Russia.

As a part of the above-mentioned inquiry, I have now before me a list of those suicides in the prisons which have found their way to the daily Press in Russia. This list extends from January, 1906, to November 1, 1908, and contains 160 cases, out of which 30 took place in 1906, 70 in 1907, and 60 during the first ten months of 1908.

Here are some abstracts from that terrible list. They contain a few cases for 1906, and the whole list for 1908:--

In 1906

1. In a political prison in Moscow, John Fedouloff, 23 years old, hanged himself.
2. In a political prison in St. Petersburg, a medical woman-student, M., shot herself.
- 3, 4. In Uman, in consequence of police outrages, there is a regular epidemic of suicides and cases of madness: a wine merchant, Gervitz hanged himself ; a man named Toulchiner was saved just time from the rope; two others went mad.

5. In Odessa, a political prisoner, Leibovitch, poured kerosene on his bed, set it on fire, threw himself on the bed, and thus ended his life.
6. In Moscow, K. Schvets hanged himself when under arrest.
7. In Orel, a peasant, E. Soboskin, being in solitary confinement, hanged himself.
8. In St. Petersburg, in the Cross prison, in a punishment cell a sailor, Arnold, hanged himself.
9. In Elisavetgrad, Larionoff, condemned to death, waited for the execution three months, went mad and hanged himself, but was saved, after which he was condemned to hard labour.
10. In the Vasilkov prison an unknown deserter poisoned himself by means of carbolic acid.
11. In Toula, Starostin, being arrested, soaked his clothes in kerosene and set himself on fire.

1908

101. At the Simferopol prison the political prisoner Stalberg poured kerosene over his bed-clothes and set fire to them, but was rescued.
102. At Odessa, Komatch, the son of a chemist, poisoned himself in prison.
- 103-4. At Warsaw, two members of a band of robbers hanged themselves in prison.
105. At Omsk, a peasant sentenced to death seized the revolver of a policeman and wanted to kill him, but at the approach of a patrol of soldiers shot himself.

106. At Yalta, the political prisoner Nikolay Timoshin burned himself to death in prison by drenching himself with kerosene.

107. At the Kieff prison the political prisoner Gostilin, sentenced to death with the other revolutionary socialists of Kursk, poisoned himself.

108. At Petersburg, at the Roshdestvensky police-station, an unknown man, arrested for robbery, hanged himself.

109. In the Tchita prison, Krivtsoff, sentenced to penal servitude, cut his throat.

110. At the Nizhni-Novgorod prison, Ustinoff, an artisan, sentenced to death for the murder of a policeman, poisoned himself, not wishing to fall into the hands of the executioner.

111. At Tchita, a woman named Kozhevin, sentenced to death for murder, poisoned herself before the execution.

112. At Riga, Neruoff committed suicide on the eve of the day appointed for his execution.

113. At St. Petersburg, a peasant woman named Kryloff, aged 32, poisoned herself while being conveyed by a policeman to prison, where she was to undergo a term of confinement in accordance with a legal verdict.

114. At St. Petersburg, in the Viborg Solitary Confinement prison, a political prisoner, the journalist, I. P. Remezoff, attempted to burn himself, but was rescued.

115. At Kieff, Fodosenko, sentenced to death, poisoned himself.

116. At the Tsaritsin police-station the unemployed Masloutoff, aged 18, arrested for

posting up proclamations of the Social Democratic Party, burnt himself with kerosene.

117. In a cell of the Kharkov prison, Tcherukovsky soaked his clothes with kerosene and burnt himself to death.

118. In a prison hospital at St. Petersburg, the prisoner Kuptsoff, aged 34, hanged himself.

119. At Odessa, an old merchant arrested for murder hanged himself.

120. Kuznetsoff, a political prisoner, hanged himself in a St. Petersburg prison.

121. Domushkin hanged himself at the Yalta police-station.

122. At the Odessa prison, a political prisoner, Helen Smirnoff, poured kerosene over her clothes and her bed, and set fire to them.

123. At the Sevastpool prison, the political prisoner Gulbinsky hanged himself.

124. In the solitary cell of a St. Petersburg prison, a political prisoner named Bernstein hanged himself, but was rescued.

125. At the police-station of the Narva district at St. Petersburg a prisoner named Pybin broke his head against the wall. During his subsequent stay at the hospital he inflicted upon himself a wound with a knife.

126. At a prison at Odessa, V. Orloff, who was arrested for theft, burned himself with kerosene.

127-8. At the Kazan Government prison, two prisoners, whose cases were being investigated, poisoned themselves.

129. A convict threw himself from a boat into the water at Nizhni-Novgorod and was drowned.

130. At Odessa, V. P. Ostroúhoff, who had twice been sentenced to death for the murder of a spy and for robbery, on being placed in a solitary cell to await his execution, took poison and died.

131. At Kieff, the criminal Yushkoff, who had fulfilled the duties of an executioner and who was kept in a separate cell, set fire to it. It is supposed that he was insane; Yushkoff had been wounded by the prisoners for undertaking the duties of executioner.

132. The peasant Safronoff, sentenced at St. Petersburg to two years' imprisonment, breaking loose from the guard conveying him, threw himself into a lake and was drowned.

133. In the Saratov prison, Stepanoff, sentenced to death, hanged himself on a strap.

134. Another man in the same prison likewise tried to hang himself but was rescued.

135. In Kurilovo-Pokrovskoye (district of Odessa), Kuhadze, accused of stealing horses, hanged himself in prison.

136. In the garden of the prison hospital at Simbirsk, Liakhoff, sentenced to penal servitude for murder, hanged himself. In a letter he says: "Though innocent, I suffer because of false witnesses."

137. At the Simferopol prison, Kokovtseff, soaking his clothes in kerosene, burned himself.

138. In the Simferopol prison, Odonoff, sentenced to death for a prison mutiny, cut his throat.

139. In the Saratov prison, Popoff, on hearing of the confirmation of his death sentence, burned himself with the aid of kerosene. He was accused of an armed attack on a house.

140. In the Yamskaya prison at Moscow, Hekhriakoff hanged himself, but was rescued.

141. Nazarsky, a police officer of the Spassky district of St. Petersburg, being arrested for robbing a drunken man, hanged himself.

142-3. Two men condemned to death, Sounnev and Sareov, committed suicide at Riga.

144. At the Kolomensky police-station at St. Petersburg, a workman, Pocheykin, who was arrested for theft, hanged himself.

145. At Simferopol, Kravchenko, condemned to death, wounded another condemned man, Zavortrinsky, and then cut his own throat.

146. At the Riga prison, Berzin, head of a revolutionary group, committed suicide.

147. At a police-station at Odessa, the robber Freidenberg attempted to wound himself fatally with a piece of iron.

148. In the Kishineff prison, a prisoner named Sibov, 23 years old, condemned to penal servitude in Siberia, poisoned himself.

149. In Berdicheff, the agent of the Russian company for delivery of goods was arrested for a theft ; in prison he threw himself into the sanitary well.

150. In Odessa, in the common cell for women prisoners, T. Savitzkaia cut her throat and

stomach with a piece of glass. She was imprisoned by the orders of the Secret Police.

150-151. In the Tomsk prison, Hondiakoff and Kouznetsoff poisoned themselves. They were suspected of having killed a government money collector of the government wine-shops.

152. In the Petrovsk prison, a prisoner, Agafonoff, condemned to hard labour, hanged himself, but was saved.

153. In St. Petersburg, an imprisoned soldier, Iliin, jumped out of the window.

154. In St. Petersburg, a young peasant, Reichstin, arrested as a criminal, broke his head on a wall.

155. In the province of Kieff, in the Loukoyanoff prison, a former village school teacher, Prisiajnina, condemned to death, poisoned herself.

156-158. In Kieff, in the same prison, on three successive days three men poisoned themselves--Kravchenko and Sinuchenko, who were condemned to death, and Captain Lipovskii, who was condemned to exile for taking part in the Union of Officers. The last died, but the other two were executed.

159. In Odessa, in solitary confinement, Novikoff set fire to him self by means of kerosene.

160. In Tomsk, in the solitary confinement cell of the reformatory prison, Volkoff burned himself to death with kerosene.

CHAPTER III EXECUTIONS

It may be remembered that the Russian Prime Minister, M. Stolypin, interviewed last year by Mr. W. T. Stead, and asked about the executions, which were going on then at that time in very great numbers, said that he had no exact figures, but he thought that 15 a month would be a near approach to truth (the Times, August 3, 1908). I contested these figures in the Times of August 14, 1908, and maintained that the number of executions during the first six months of 1908 had been from 4 to 15 every day--there being, however, no executions on Sundays and other holidays--and that it reached the figure of 60 to 90 every month.

We have now the official figures of the executions for the last four years. The Law Committee of the Duma having asked the exact figures from the Ministry of Interior, the Police Department of that Ministry communicated them to the Duma on February 6, 1909. But as they are still incomplete--they apply only to civilians, as the Department of Police mentions in his communication to the Duma--I also place by their side our own figures. These figures have been obtained as follows : Several leading St. Petersburg and Moscow papers till lately gave telegrams every day from the provincial towns, stating how many persons have been condemned on that day and giving their names, what were the crimes imputed to them, and how many, and

who, had been executed. The daily figures were added up, and the monthly and yearly items were published by several papers, including the well-known Law Review, Pravo, together with all other statistics of prosecutions. These were the figures communicated by the Russian refugees to the London Press, and given in the above-mentioned letter of mine to the Times. Besides, I have now before me a carefully-prepared memorial, in which, besides matter concerning the exiles, all the executions mentioned in the leading Russian newspapers since 1905 till November 1, 1908, have been carefully tabulated, according to the age, the social standing, and the supposed crime of the executed persons. The cases of ill-treatment in prisons and administrative executions, mentioned in these papers, up to the same date (November 1, 1908), are also enumerated in special chapters.¹

Here are both sets of figures, of which the official figures apply only to civilians:--

Courts	Martial--	1905.....
1906.....		1907.....
1908.....	Field Courts Martial, acting from August 19, 1906, to April 20,	
1907.....	Total.....	OFFICIAL FIGURES.
	OUR FIGURES.	
	DeathSentences. Executions.	
	DeathSentences. Executions.	

724501,0561,741--
 10+144+456*825+683967731,4321,835--
 32280508802**676
 -- 2,118-- 2,298***

* To this figure of 456 executions, 84 soldiers must be added, out of whom 19 were hanged and 65 shot, thus raising the yearly total to 540.

** First 10 months only.

*** Two months, November and December, 1908, missing.

+ How many military must be added to these figures remains unknown.

No official figures for the year 1909 have yet been published, but the figures compiled from the daily papers produced before the Duma in a recent discussion are:--

1909	Death Sentences.	Executions.
January.....	121	107
February.....	132	76
March.....	143	52
--	--	
Total (3 months).....	396	235

The discrepancies between the two tables as regards the death sentences are easily explained. Our figures give the death sentences that were pronounced, and telegraphed the same day to the papers, while the official figures probably give the death sentences confirmed later on by the Governors-General of the respective districts.

As regards the difference between our figures of executions in 1907 and the official figures (508 and 456 respectively), it arises from the fact that the official figures do not include the executions of the military. There having been, according to an official statement, 84 executions of soldiers in the course of the year 1907, the official figure for that year becomes 540, and is consequently higher than our figure (by 32 cases). That our figures would be possibly below the real ones was foreseen, as some executions may not find their way to the Press. The same remark very probably applies to the years 1906 and 1908, for which years we have no official figures of executions among the military.

Now, it must be borne in mind that the above figures do not include those who were shot in the streets (in the Gapon manifestation, during the rejoicings after the promulgation of the Constitution of October 30, 1905, or during uprisings in the Baltic provinces, in the Caucasus, and in the Russian villages), nor do they include those who have been executed during their transfers from one prison to another (attempts at escape, true or alleged), nor those who have been executed by simple administrative orders of the military commanders--these last cases being not uncommon--as it appeared from several discussions which took place in the First Department of the Senate (see Chapter V.), when the Senate recognised (by a small majority) that executions without even a trial

before a Field Court Martial were not illegal under the State of Siege law, such as it was promulgated by the Emperor. For these executions, the Senate decided, the military authorities are directly responsible to the Emperor, whose orders they execute.

There being no official figures concerning the different categories of executions without any trial, all we can do is to give the figures which have been compiled for us in the above-mentioned inquiry with the same desire of arriving at the truth as the above row of figures. They run as follows : Shot without sentence--376 in 1905, 864 in 1906, 59 in 1907, and 32 in 1908 (first 10 months).

In trying to excuse the large number of executions which take place in Russia, in consequence of verdicts of Courts Martial now active in more that two-thirds of the Russian Empire, the present ministry usually point to the considerable number of murders and attempts to murder which stand in the official statistics. These figures run as follows :--

	Murdered.	Wounded.	
1905 (2 1/2 months).....	222		217
1906	1,126	1,506	
1907.....	3,001	1,076	
1908.....	1,820	2,083	

These are the figures which were communicated to Duma Commission on the abolition of capital punishment when it came together on June 3, 1909. And in communicating them, the Department of

Police added : "In these included all crimes committed in all the localities placed under the law of siege (extraordinary and increased Okhrana").

However, in order to get any correct idea, these figures must be compared with the numbers of murders and persons wounded in ordinary times; and when this is done, it appears that in the numbers that are mentioned in the above figures there is absolutely no extraordinary increase which might in any way excuse the suspension of ordinary justice, and the surrender of Russia to the laws that Prevail in times of war and to the summary justice of the Military Courts.

Here are the figures for ordinary times:--

NUMBERS OF MURDERS IN EUROPEAN RUSSIA ALONE.

During these periods the Population gradually increased from 65 to 70 Millions. Average Yearlynumber of Prosecutionsfor Murder Begun. EXECUTIONS.

	By Ordinary Courts.	By	Courts
Martial.			
1874-1878	1879-1883	1884-1888	1889-1893
1894	3,599	4,161	5,170
1895	1,137	4,991	
nonenonenonenonenone	Common	211	
(from 185 102 (from 189	Political	70 6 to	
1890 24 1 to1900)			

Taking the number of acts of violence immediately before the revolution, we find

that, in 1904, there were, in a population of 142,700,000, no less than 2,800 persons condemned for murder, and 3,778 for wounding (Official Report of the Ministry of justice for 1904). It thus appears that in 1907 there was indeed a sudden increase of acts of violence--provoked by the countless executions, without any form of trial, during punitive expeditions, especially in Siberia, the Caucasus, and the Baltic provinces, and the terrible brutalities of the police officers in the villages. But there was no increase whatever in the year 1908. Therefore the maintenance of the state of siege in two-thirds of the Empire cannot be defended on this ground. This has been also forcibly demonstrated during the debates in the Duma on the law of siege, on February 11th to 14th (O.S.).

Under the military law which is now in action in most of the Russian territory, the smallest agrarian disorders, and even the setting fire to a landlord's barn or stack are treated as implying the death penalty. The Military Courts themselves most reluctantly pronounce the death sentence in such cases, their members loudly condemning afterwards in private the obligation under which they are to apply military law, and the orders of the Emperor who wishes them to apply that law in all its severity.

Thus, at Ufa, the Court Martial sitting on March 3rd last, pronounced the following sentences on five local peasants who had

robbed another peasant of 1 rouble 40 kopeks (3 sh.): Pavel Abramoff, death ; Petr Abramoff and Stepan Antonoff, 10 years' hard labour ; Mihail Bagunoff, 8 years' imprisonment; and Kuzma Antonoff, 2 months' imprisonment.

The Court pronounced that ferocious verdict because such is the law in time of war; but it immediately had the courage to ask the Governor-General not to confirm their sentence, but to mitigate it. Most Courts, however, have not that courage, and men are hanged for what, under ordinary conditions, would imply a few months, or even a few weeks of imprisonment.

Many similar cases could be quoted: At Moscow, a Court Martial sentenced a peasant from one of the districts of the government of Moscow to death, for having set fire to a stack of hay on the property of a member of the State's Council, Herr Schlippe.

At Novocherkask, the Court Martial condemned within a few days twenty men to the death penalty--one of them for having spoken to another prisoner about making an attempt to kill a policeman.² In the government of Tambov, eighteen persons were condemned last March to be hanged, and out of them three prostitutes for having given shelter to some robber, and one peasant for having set fire to an empty barn.³

The executions in Novockerkask were carried on by volunteer convicts in such a terrible way that the agony of some of the executed lasted from a quarter of an hour to half an hour, the executioner strangling the men with his own hands. As the executions took place in a remote suburb of that city, in the midst of winter, the condemned men were brought to the place of execution half frozen.⁴

Owing to the haste with which all the affairs are conducted before the Courts Martial, judicial errors are much frequent than is usually the case. Thus it appeared that out of the prisoners who were hanged at Odessa on February 1st last, the men Orenbach, Greyerman, and two brothers Truger were condemned by mistake. They not only took no part in the defence of a house in which some anarchists had locked themselves, receiving the police and military with shots, they ran away from this house, together with other people, and had absolutely no knowledge of the men who had locked themselves in the house.

After the death sentence has been pronounced it continually happens that the condemned men wait for the execution for whole months, and the scenes which take place at the executions are such as might be expected only in Persia or Turkey.⁵

Men executed without any form of trial.--The worst is that the question about the right of

the Governors-General to execute people even without sending them before a Court Martial, by simple administrative orders, having been contested by several members of the Senate, this High Court of Russia has again decided a few weeks ago that such right of summary execution results from the Imperial Decree by which the rules of the state of siege were determined, and that therefore the Governors-General, in inflicting the death penalty by simple administrative order, are responsible exclusively to the Emperor in person.⁶

If all this be taken into account, one can easily see how it happens that, the action of the regular laws being suspended, military justice, designed exclusively for time of war, has taken the place of the civil administration and is covering Russia with gallows.

The demoralising effect of such a substitution upon the habits and life of the country needs no commentary.

It is also needless to say that this large number of executions is provoking general discontent among the educated classes. Thus, in December last, at a general meeting of the lawyers of the St. Petersburg judicial district it was unanimously resolved to express sympathy with the interpellation in the Duma against the steadily increasing number of condemnations to death and executions which have been taking place lately.

Besides, a society was formed lately among influential persons, to work for the abolition of capital punishment in Russia. But the authorities have refused the registration of this society under the pretext that capital punishment being recognised by law, any agitation against it would be unlawful.

As to the degrading influence of these wholesale executions upon the population, it is simply terrible, and many facts, simply awful, relating what is happening at night, during the executions, in what is now called by the cabmen "The Slaughter Yard" at Moscow, could be added in support of the ideas so forcibly developed by Leo Tolstoy in his pamphlet, "I Cannot be Silent."

Footnotes

1 According to a decision of the Ministry, the papers were forbidden a few months ago to publish in full the crimes for which the death sentences were pronounced, and a short time ago the Moscow Courts Martial stopped communicating even the numbers of the executions which took place. The executions are carried out in great secrecy at night, and in May last it was learned that fifteen executions had taken place at Moscow, of which no information had been supplied to the papers.

2Ryech, April, 1909.

3Russkiya Védomosti, March 22, 1909.

4Ryech, April, 1909.

5See with reference to this subject the interpellation made in the Duma on April 8 and 21, 1909.

6See page 50.

CHAPTER IV THE EXILES

On the date referred to in the previous chapter (August, 1908, some correspondence appeared in the Times concerning the numbers of administrative exiles in Siberia and Northern Russia. The Russian Prime Minister, M. Stolypin, in an interview with Mr. Stead, told him that the number of administrative exiles was only about 12,000. The Assistant Minister of the Interior, M. Makaroff, also interviewed a fortnight later by Mr. Stead, explained, however, that this figure could only apply to those who had been exiled in virtue of a decision given by the Ministry of the Interior; but there were also, he added, a considerable number of persons who had been exiled by mere orders of the local Governors, and about whom the Ministry of the Interior had no information. I wrote at that time to the Times that, according to our estimates, the number of exiles in Siberia and Northern Russia reached the figure of about 78,000. We have now the exact figures, which have been communicated by the Department of Police to the Law Committee of the Duma. The Police Department, probably taking into account the considerable number who have escaped, puts the figure at 74,000 ; but does not state how many of these have been tried, and how many exiled by administrative order. (Some information about this matter will be found further on in this chapter.)

Attempts made privately to give the exact figures an distribution of the exiles in different parts of the Russian Empire have failed; but the total given by the Police Department (October, 1908), must be correct, as it was based upon the numbers of men and women sent out to Siberia a Northern Russia from the chief transfer prisons.

According to documents communicated to the State Council, the number of persons exiled by order of the Ministry of the Interior has now reached the figure of 15,500, and the greater part of these have been classified as follows : Workmen, 6,362 ; peasants, 3,879; students, 540; teachers, 792 ; tradesmen, 755 ; officials of the Zemstvos, 315 ; unknown, 2,857. It will thus be seen that while formerly the administrative exiles chiefly consisted of students and "intellectuals," the main bulk of them is now composed of workmen and peasants deported either for strikes, for agrarian disorders, or simply because they are considered by the local police authorities to be a disturbing element.

The conditions under which these exiles live are as bad as when they were described twenty years ago by Kennan, Stepniak, and myself, with the only difference that at the present time exiles are also sent to regions quite unsuitable for habitation, such as Turukhansk in the far north, at the mouth of the Yenisei. The conditions there are described

by a reliable person writing from the district to the St. Petersburg newspaper Ryechn1:--

"All the exiles are settled in the Turukhansk district, which borders the River Yenisei, from Turukhansk to Yeniseisk, a distance of 720 miles, in which there are only 64 small villages. The main bulk of the exiles are in 30 villages, in the largest of which, Sumarokovo, there are only 20 houses, while in the others there are only from 5 to 7 houses, with from 30 to 40 inhabitants. In some villages the total number of the inhabitants does not exceed 20 persons. Below Turukhansk, in a tract of country 670 miles long, there are only 37 villages, the largest of which, Dudinka, contains only 10 houses, the others being mere post stations of 1, 2, or 3 houses. It is quite easy to see that when 15 or 20 exiles are settled in such small villages they are a burden to the population, and can find absolutely no work to live upon. The result is that lately a band of men, 10 at first, and later on 25, went along the river plundering the houses of some of the residents. Sixty-five men are now being prosecuted, and have been marched on foot from Turukhansk to Yeniseisk in order to be brought before a court martial."

Information of the most heartrending description as to the conditions under which the administrative exiles live, has been communicated by reliable persons, including several deputies of the first and second Duma, and published in the Russian Press. We have,

moreover, before us large numbers of letters giving much information, and will give extracts from a few of them. A mother, an absolutely trustworthy person, who has gone into exile to accompany her young daughter, writes as follows to the British Committee in Aid of Administrative Exiles:--

"I have followed my daughter, condemned by the Court to exile for life in Siberia, with the intention of softening the conditions of her long journey.... Most of the exiles, having spent something like two years or more in prison, before coming before a Court, are quite exhausted by the hard prison treatment. They are dressed in long rough coats and heavy, ill-fitting shoes, and have to carry all the rest of their clothing on their backs, in sacks weighing about 30 lb. During the part of the journey which is made by train, men and women are put to travel together in the carriages, under the supervision of warders and soldiers. These men are accustomed to consider the prisoners as without rights of any kind, and therefore permit themselves to treat them as they choose. For women this journey is especially terrible. In one railway carriage there were three women among a lot of ordinary criminals, and when the commanding officer wanted to chain them in pairs, he did not hesitate to fetter one of the women to a man, and to keep them thus for a great part of the journey. In the carriage where my daughter was, there was a party of women exiled for having no passports. Most of them

were prostitutes. The soldiers of the guard drank with them, and my daughter, being in their company, had to witness the most abominable scenes.

"Still worse things are to be seen in the transfer prisons, where the politicals are kept with the ordinary criminals, under abominable conditions. When they come to the place of exile, they are left in some small village, usually hundreds of miles from the small district town. More than 100 persons are often left in a small village, and all that the police authorities do is to see that they do not run away. Sometimes an exile has been to give up all his winter clothing, in order to rent a room in a peasant's house; and many would have died from hunger and cold were it not for the help given them by their brother exiles. The prices in such villages are very high, owing to the numbers of the exiles; and it is absolutely impossible for exiles to find any work, or to earn anything, however little. Every kind of work suitable to intellectuals is forbidden by law.

"I have spent one month with my daughter in one of these villages, and I have seen nothing but worn faces of men vainly going about in search of work. They tried to open a laundry, but there was nobody to give linen to be washed-every one did their own washing. And the same was found with all sorts of workshops. In the infirmary there was neither doctor nor medicine, and yet it was strictly

forbidden to leave the village and go to the nearest district town. The village of which I speak and in which my daughter is kept, is one of the best in respect of climate and other conditions of life, and I asked myself : I 'Does the Government know the lot it is preparing for the people whom it sends to exile in this way? Does it know that in the conditions which prevail it is condemning men to a slow death?'"

Some idea of the conditions under which the administrative live may be given by the following statement, which has been prepared for us in the Naryn district of the Government of Tobolsk :--

This district belongs to that immense region of marsh and wood which is marked on the maps of Western Siberia as a marsh, and covers hundreds of miles from north to south and from west to east. The only access to it is by the rivers, on the banks of which are a few dry spots, while the country between the rivers is covered with almost impenetrable forests, and until lately was quite uninhabited, except for a few small villages. A dozen little settlements of a few small have recently appeared along some of the rivers draining this great marsh. Last year there were, however, no less than 700 administrative exiles in this region.

The Government allowance to these exiles was, until January, 1908, 3r. 30k. (7s. 1d.) per month. But since then it has been reduced to 1r. 80k. (3s.) per month. However, it is only

the administrative exiles who receive that allowance. Those who have been exiled by sentence of the Courts (the ssylno-poselentsy) receive nothing. The communes of the villages to which they are sent are bound to give them some land, but as the exiles have no tools and no cattle, and most of them are townspeople, they simply starve. In the larger villages the exiles have organised their own soup kitchens, which supply one meal a day for 2 1/2d. or 3d. The money granted by the Government to the administrative exiles for their winter and summer dress, i.e., 60s. 8d. a year, is evidently used for food, because the high prices of flour and salt make the monthly allowance of 3s. absolutely insufficient to keep body and soul together, notwithstanding the cheapness of meat. Very few are happy enough to earn a few shillings by their work.

Near Tchelyabinsk there are about a thousand exiles, mostly in awful misery.²

The Social Democratic Deputies in the Duma have received lately the report of a detailed inquiry into the condition of political exiles sent to Siberia by sentence of the Courts (ssylno-poselentsy). They have detailed information about 110 persons who have passed through the transfer prison of Krasnoyarsk. The greater number of them (77) are workmen, and only 24 are intellectuals ; 58 of them are Russians, 19 Poles, 20 Jews, and 2 Germans. In fifteen cases it has been established that these men have been exiled

owing to having trusted agents provocateurs, and in three cases testimony against them was obtained from witnesses under physical torture.³

Even those who are sent to the more fertile and favoured southern parts of Siberia are not better off than the others. Those who are not noblemen--and they are the great majority--receive in Southern Siberia only from 2r. 40k. (5s. 2d.) to 6r. (13s.) a month, but in the latter case they have to pay from 4s. to 6s. a month for their lodgings. In the small district towns of Southern Siberia there is exactly the same want of employment as in the Far North.

Those who are exiled to the most thinly populated parts of Northern Siberia are confined to the encampments of the natives. It is well known that skin diseases are terribly prevalent in Siberia. Nearly all the natives are infected, as also many families of Russian peasants ; but the exiles are compelled to lodge with the natives in their tiny huts and tents, and are happy if they are given a corner in the log hut of a Russian settler.

The presence of the exiles is generally felt as a heavy burden by the native population, which is becoming more and more hostile to them, and the feeling of hostility is increased by the presence of criminals among them. For persons sentenced for theft and other breaches of the ordinary law are being sent to Siberia in company with administrative exiles

transported for rebellion or other political offences. Perhaps the authorities do this from considerations of economy, perhaps for other reasons.

Those who have been exiled to the northern provinces of European Russia, namely, to Archangel, are in no better plight than those who have been transported to Siberia. A number of them have written to complain to M. Bulat, Deputy to the Duma, about the intolerable conditions under which they live. Having been exiled, not by administrative order, but by sentence of the Courts, these people receive no support from the Government; and they get nothing from the village communities; being themselves short of arable land, they do not give them allotments. "Save us from starvation and unavoidable death from hunger," they wrote to their Deputy to the Duma.⁴

Altogether, the peasants who have been exiled for agrarian disturbances--and they are very numerous by this time--are in the most precarious condition. In Tsarev (government of Astrakhan), where two hundred administrative exiles are kept, typhus is raging among them. No medical assistance is given, and the typhus patients are sleeping by the side of the healthy men in the common doss-houses of Tsarev, because the owners of private houses have sent them away from fear of infection.⁵

In the face of such misery, which is an unavoidable result of the system, we hardly dare speak of the abuse of the powers of the local police and the gendarme authorities, which in some cases renders the state of things still worse. Thus, in the government of Vyatka, the exiles for a long time did not receive their dress money. In February last they at length received the small allowance for summer clothes, the winter allowance being still unpaid.

At Tchelyabinsk it appears, from a telegram sent to the Head of the Prison administration by M. Tcheidze, Deputy to the Duma, that the exiles were in the most terrible plight because the authorities had given them no food money and no dress money, and forbade them to move from one village to another.

The only bright feature is that the political exiles do everything possible to maintain each other's courage and to prevent demoralisation. Everywhere they have organised their own societies for mutual help, to which every one who receives any monies from home pays a regular contribution of so much per cent. With this money they start soup kitchens, small libraries, and lectures, but the difficulty of getting books and papers and the high cost of light in the northern parts during the winter is extreme, and the authorities continually put hindrances in the way of such organisations. In some places in the Far North during the long winter nights sheer despair lays hold of the

exiles. In January last, in one of the remote settlements of the Obdorsk region, five exiles ended their lives by suicide. A girl took the lead, and she was followed by four men.

The following extracts will give a still more concrete idea of the life of some of the exiles. One correspondent, writing from the Ilga canton, says:--

"We are here 90 persons, mostly grouped in a big trading village. We receive absolutely nothing from the crown" (they are ssylno-poselentsys). "Happily enough, most of us have found some work ; only a few of us, 10 or 12, have not. We have a mutual aid society and a soup kitchen supplying food at low prices."

From the government of Tobolsk one of the exiles writes to our Committee of Inquiry:--

"In this government we are about 2,000, Out of whom nearly 500 have been exiled by sentence of the courts (ssylno-poselentsy). The remainder are administrative exiles. The greater number of us are in the districts of Tura, Berezoff (64° N. lat.), and Tobolsk, and in the districts of Surgut, Tara, and Tyumen. About finding work I can say nothing bright. It is only in the summer that we get some work at the fisheries, and in the towns some students and most of the skilled workmen have well-paid work; but the great proportion of us are in very low spirits, having absolutely no work. The want of work is most severely felt by

the ssylno-poselentsys, because the administratives cannot do much to help them. Since January 9, 1907, the administrative exiles belonging to the unprivileged classes have received only 4r. 80k. (10s. 4d.) in the Berezoff and Surgut districts, 4r. 50k. (9s. 4 1/2d.) in the Tobolsk district, and 4r. 20k. (9s. 1d.) in the others. Married people receive some assistance for wife and children. Noblemen and those who have receive university education receive 11r. 25k. (24s. 4d.) per month. There is also the dress allowance of 25r. (54s.) in August and 4r. 80k. (10s. 4d.) in May. As to the other exiles, they receive absolutely nothing. They are chiefly in the Tara district, a fertile region, but most of them know nothing about agricultural work and have great difficulty in finding anything to do."

Footnotes

1Ryech, No. 85, April, 1909.

2Tovarisch, April 6, 1908.

3Novaya Russ, 1909, date missing on our cutting.

4Russ. Véd., April 1, 1909.

5Kievskiy Vestnik, December 29, 1908.

CHAPTER V EVIDENCE LAID BEFORE THE FIRST AND SECOND DUMA ON COURTS MARTIAL, EXECUTIONS, AND THE OVERCROWDING OF PRISONS¹

On the historic day of the 10th of May, 1906, that of the opening of the first Russian Parliament, when the elected representatives of the Russian nation passed through the streets towards the Tavrida Palace, from the dense throngs which lined their passage, one great cry arose—

"Amnesty ! Amnesty! Amnesty first!"

And the first speech in the new-born Parliament was for amnesty. It was made by Petrunkévitch, the oldest leader of the Russian Liberals :--

"Our honour, our conscience," he said, " ordains that our first thought, our first free word should be dedicated to those who sacrificed their freedom to that of our beloved Fatherland " (storm of applause). "All the prisons in the country are overflowing" (cries of indignation). "Thousands of hands are stretched out to us with hope and beseeching. And conscience urges us to spare no possible effort to prevent the wasting of further lives in the victory so soon to be ours. . . ."

At the very next sitting of the first Duma the Liberal Deputy Rodicheff, in a speech of

passionate eloquence, raised the question again:--

"Everywhere and always during the electoral campaign," he said, "one and the same cry was raised above all others--'Amnesty !' We are witnesses that this is the demand of the whole nation, not only of those who suffer in the prisons or of their friends. Blood is not shed now so often as it was three months ago; but, gentlemen, this last month 99 persons were executed in Russia. . . . We, here in the Duma, cannot work ; that feeling oppresses us. Those bloody spectres are here--here in this very hall. They must be removed in order that we may do our work."

One after another member of the Duma, themselves recent sufferers from arbitrary imprisonment, told harassing tales of what they had witnessed.

"I, myself," said Father Krassoun from the rostrum, "was kept in a prison, packed with 400 people who were receiving a daily allowance of 6 kopeks (1 1/2d.), barely enough to escape starvation--not enough to escape perpetual hunger. I asked them, 'Why were you beaten with nagaikas? Why were you thrown into prison?' And the reply was always, 'The police arrested us because we refused to bribe them!'"

"You have heard here of the ghastly spectres which soar above our land," said the Deputy

Miklasheffsky; "I will remind you of two victims personally known to me--the student, Grigoriev, and the barrister, Tararykin. Grigoriev was shot because another man, to save his own life, declared that Grigoriev had spoken at a certain meeting; and this declaration was enough to condemn the boy. Tararykin, the barrister, tried in vain to convince the officer, who ordered the soldiers to shoot him, that he was acting illegally. He was nevertheless shot without trial or investigation."

General Kouzmin-Karavaeff--himself a military procureur and a Deputy sitting on the Right of the Constitutional Democrats--appealed in the Duma against the horrors of official bloodshed.

"Over six hundred men," he said, "were, during the last four months, hanged or shot, or otherwise deprived of life by most horrible methods, without trial or after mock trials. This figure is appalling, and it shows us once more that the chief motive of capital punishment here, in Russia, is sanguinary vengeance."²

Sitting after sitting of the Duma's first session was devoted to appeals to the Tsar and the Government for amnesty. This subject also had the first place in the Duma's answer to the Crown Speech. It was an appeal to deaf ears. After a hopeless struggle, which lasted over a fortnight, the Duma gave way and began its legislative work. But complaints and petitions

poured in upon the Deputies from every constituency, depriving them of the necessary calmness. Then the continuous interpellations to the Government began.

On May 21, 1906, the following interpellation was unanimously presented by the Duma to M. Stolypin:--

"Does the Minister know that the authorities have filled all prisons to overflowing? That among the prisoners are persons admitted to be innocent? That in contravention of even the exceptional and martial laws, prisoners are kept beyond the term legally ordained, no charge being brought against them, whereby they are driven to utter despair and voluntary starvation?"

The Cabinet waited a full month before answering this interpellation.

On May 25th the Deputies of the Duma made another attempt to stay the hand of the executioners. A telegram was received by the Duma to the effect that eight men had been condemned to death in the Baltic provinces by a summary Court Martial, that they had wished to appeal to a higher Court on the grounds of complete neglect of procedure at their trial; but that the Governor-General had refused them the right of appeal and confirmed the sentence. The Duma begged the Government to postpone the execution and to allow the appeal of the condemned to be

heard. Upon this, a hasty order was sent from St. Petersburg that the eight men were to be immediately executed; and when this was done the Government informed the Duma that, unfortunately, it was now too late to discuss the matter.

The numerous interpellations and requests put to the Government to postpone the executions always met with the answer—

"We cannot do that. So long as the law exists we are obliged to carry it out."

The Duma decided to remove this obstacle, and, on May 31, 1906, a Bill was brought in, consisting of two paragraphs:--

(1) Capital punishment to be abolished, and (2) until the revision of the penal code is done, capital punishment to be replaced by the heaviest sentence immediately preceding it on the scale of punishments.

After having passed the usual legal stages, this Bill was unanimously adopted by the Duma on July 11, 1906, but it never received the Tsar's sanction, and the executions have continued at the same rate.

During the debates upon the Bill the Deputy Nadvorsky told the Assembly that two hundred Warsaw barristers had sent a formal complaint to the Senate against the Governors-General of Lublin and Warsaw, by whose orders

seventeen youths were shot without trial.³ The Senate divided in its resolution upon this remonstrance. Some Senators declared that as the Governors were acting under martial law, they had the right to adopt whatever measures they might find expedient. The minority found that martial law does not give the right of indiscriminate execution, but that nevertheless this complaint must be rejected because only those who were victims of illegal behaviour on the part of Governors had the right to complain. Owing to this disagreement the Senate adjourned the examination of the case until unanimity be arrived at. Again and again this case was debated in the Senate, the last time in May, 1909, but the Senators remained firm in their disagreement, some maintaining that, under martial law, Section 12, the Governors-General have the right to execute at their own discretion, and are responsible only before the Tsar, and others repeating that the act was no doubt illegal, but that only the victims had the right to complain. As the victims were already in their graves the Governors-General, till now, continue their rule unhindered.

Looking through the official shorthand reports Duma's session one meets upon every page interpellations to the Government concerning numberless illegal and arbitrary acts, such as the exile of thousands of village schoolmasters, peasants, workmen, and intellectuals. I give a few chance quotations.

The Deputies Rostovtseff and Khrushcheff received the following telegram from the town Ostrogorsk, on June 1st:--

"After our husbands had remained four months in prison, they sent a telegram to M. Stolypin on April 28th, asking for release or trial. On May 2nd an answer was received ordering their immediate deportation : nine to the Narym region (a desolate corner of Western Siberia) for four years, and one, a consumptive, to the Astrakhan province for three years. These prisoners were mostly members of the zemstvos, and arrested without reason, nothing suspicious being found upon them and no charge brought against them. They were not even interrogated. Signed--the wives of Dr. Shiriaeff, the engineer Andrianoff, &c."

At the same sitting another telegram was received from Voronesh, sent by the wife of Dr. Romanoffsky, who had just been sent for a three years' exile to the Narym region.

"I implore you to examine our case. My husband's banishment is through an entire misunderstanding. In the written order of exile my husband is described as 'teacher,' not 'doctor,' and the name is given as 'Romanoff,' not 'Romanoffsky.' He was deported without being once interrogated."

From the town Uman a telegram was received by the Duma on the same day, informing the

Duma that 36 peasants, driven to despair by long imprisonment without trial or accusation, had refused food for six days, requesting trial, declaring their decision to die if it were further refused.

To finish with this one single sitting of the Duma, I will mention also an interpellation concerning the barbarous illegalities in the Baltic provinces, which are placed under several headings:--

1. Execution without trial or investigation.
2. Tortures, and flogging to the amount Of 400 strokes from the nagaikas.
3. The burning of peasants' farms and property and public buildings by the military and officials, &c.

This sitting was not at all of an exceptional character. On the contrary, during almost every other sitting the quantity of interpellations with regard to various atrocities, illegal imprisonments and executions were much more numerous. The contents of those interpellations are painfully monotonous: "Prison overflowing." "Prisoners kept for months without trial or investigation, starving themselves." "Thirty-five prisoners in Riga threatened with execution. Immediate measures urgent." "The barrister Pukhtinsky, of Tchernigov, has been kept for three months in prison without charge, and is now in exile in Siberia. His wife and five children are utterly destitute. Pukhtinsky's only offence was that

he, as a councillor of the Tchernigov Corporation, was disliked by the local authorities." "The engineer Farmakovsky, of Minsk, is kept in prison in spite of his serious illness and the order of the magistrate for his release. In the same prison are Councillor Havansky, Dr. Kaminsky, the barrister Rogalevitch, many journalists, and others. They have been imprisoned for many months, and no reasons have been given for their detention." "Two youths, aged 18 and 19, of the town of Warsaw are being court-martialled for having struck their schoolmaster. Execution threatens them."

That was on June 6th, when twenty-six interpellations concerning various atrocities and illegalities were submitted to the Duma. At the next sitting, June 9th, thirty-two interpellations of the same kind were made. This constantly increasing number made it impossible for the Duma even to debate the cases. They were simply handed over to a parliamentary Commission of 33, for transmission to the Ministry, which still remained silent upon the point. It was, however, a burning question demanding immediate and earnest attention, as may be seen from the following quotations:--

"On April 11th we were imprisoned in the Iljesk prison, by order of the district chief. The soldiers robbed us of all our money, and at the order of the policeman Volokhovsky they began to strike us with the butt-ends of their

rifles and kick us until they were tired. We were wounded all over and blood ran from our mouths, noses, and ears. Some of us had broken ribs, legs, and arms. Vidhovsky, an old man and a cripple, was more brutally treated than any of the others. He was dragged by the hair into a cell and lost consciousness. When he regained it he asked for the priest, but the request was refused. For the six subsequent days we were kept without food, and only on the seventh day were given 10 kopeks (2 1/2d.) each for food. Up to now no charge has been brought against us, and we have not been interrogated. Only the chief of the district explained to our wives that we had been arrested because some man named Binagraet had sent a denunciation to the effect that we had taken part in the festivities at the granting of the Constitution."

"We, peasants of the village Kitoff, beg you to protect us the police. On June 5th they killed three men and wounded three others without cause. For God's sake investigate the case protect us!"

During the debates of the 9th of June, the Deputy Rosenbaum told the Duma of the imprisonment of many innocent people in the town of Minsk.

"When," he said, " we told our Governor, M. Kurloff, about it, he answered, 'Perhaps there are innocent people in prison. But when once they are in prison they must not be let out.'"

This governor, Kurloff, is a celebrity in Russia. He it was who, after the granting of the October Manifesto, surrounded a meeting of citizens with troops, and ordered them to shoot down the people as they left the hall. Hundreds were shot. After that exploit Kurloff was promoted to the chief directorship of all prisons in Russia. During his two years' tenure of that office, Schlüsselburg, the famous fortress, emptied during the amnesty of 1905, was refilled tenfold, and chains, flogging, and other barbarities were introduced.

The sanitary condition of the Russian prisons was brought to such a pitch that typhus and scurvy began to decimate the prison population. Yet, as we shall see from official figures, the number of prisoners is always on the increase.

A few months ago Kurloff received a further promotion to that of Assistant Minister of the Interior, assistant of Stolypin.

On the above-mentioned day (June 9, 1906) the Duma learned that eleven persons had been condemned to death in Riga, the accusation being exclusively based upon their own depositions, extorted from them by terrible tortures. They were flogged, the wounds being subsequently filled with salt, their hair was pulled out, and loaded revolvers were held against their foreheads.

According to the Russian law, the Government has the right to adjourn its answer to interpellations of the Duma for one month, and in this case it fully availed itself of this privilege, in spite of the fact that the interpellations were of the most urgent character. But at last this month came to an end, and the members of the Government began to answer a few of the interpellations. The answers, however, completely disappointed the Duma. On the 14th of June the chief military procureur, Pavloff, while fully admitting the facts about the lawless executions and death sentences mentioned in the interpellations, contented himself with the declaration that the Governors-General received the powers to act under martial law according to their own lights ; that, when they forbid persons condemned to death by Court Martial to appeal, and order their immediate execution, they act within their rights, and that the Central Government has therefore no power to interfere (Report of the nineteenth sitting of the First Session).

On the 21St of June the Minister of Justice, Scheglovitoff, answering an interpellation concerning the two Warsaw youths court-martialled for having struck their teacher, declared that the central authorities were unable to interfere because it lay within the powers of the Governors-General to deliver any offender they chose to a Court Martial instead of to a civil magistrate. Thus a possible punishment of a short term of imprisonment

may be replaced by capital punishment at the discretion of a Governor-General.

On the same day, however, M. Stolypin, answering interpellations in the Duma, while admitting the guilt of some officials, declared that he was not responsible for the illegalities of the previous Government, and promised to prevent their recurrence during his tenure of office.

"I repeat," he said, "that the most sacred duty of the Government is to protect peace and law, the freedom, not only of labour, but also of life. And all measures of pacification which I take do not signify the coming of reaction, but that of order, which is necessary for the introduction of the most important reforms."

More than three years have passed since that time. Not even the first step has been taken for the introduction of the reforms foreshadowed by Stolypin, while the number of prisoners and exiles kept without trial is ever increasing, according even to the official figures.

The number of interpellations continued to increase, and the Ministry began to answer them wholesale.

On July 16th the Assistant Minister of the Interior, Makarof, answered 33 interpellations at once. His answer was purely formal. He admitted a few cases in which persons had been imprisoned without an order even having

been signed, but in the majority of cases he satisfied himself that such a had been issued; and as the Governors-General had been given the right to imprison people according to their own discretion, everything was done in observance of the law.

The next sitting, July 17th, a further batch of interpellations brought their number up to 370--hardly one in ten receiving an answer. The Duma was, after that, dissolved.

When, eight months later, the Second Duma came together, M. Stolypin, on March 19th, read his Ministerial Declaration, in which he stated that a special Bill would be introduced by the Ministry to the Duma, by which arrest, searching, and the opening of private correspondence would be allowed only at the written order of the judicial authorities, whose duty it would be also to verify, within twenty-four hours, the legality of any arrest ordered by the police. This was to become the immutable ordinary law, which would always be enforced, except during times of war or revolution.

In spite of this promise, exceptional laws are in force now all over the country, and exiles and imprisonments by administrative order are more numerous than ever.

The Second Duma understood from its first sitting that it would be a hopeless task to try to curb the Governmental innumerable abuses.

The scope of interpellations was narrowed to that of the most crying cases, or to questions of self-defence, i.e., when the personal inviolability of the Deputies was infringed.

Here are a few instances of such cases. On April 12, 1907, the following interpellation was made :--

"On December 11, 1906, the Court Martial in Moscow, having tried the case of two brothers Kabloff and two brothers Karakanikoff, on the charge of having wounded a policeman, condemned them to penal servitude for life. On the same day the Governor-General of Moscow, Hershelmann, in spite of the law and the special circulars sent to him by the Premier, quashed this sentence and ordered the four men to be tried by another Court Martial. The second trial was held at once, and the four prisoners were condemned to death and executed immediately" (Official report of Session II., Sitting 19th).

On April 15, 1907, several interpellations were read in the Duma with regard to the regular practice of tortures in the various prisons of Riga, Astrakhan, Algachinsk, Akatuy, &c.

The interpellation concerning the system of torture practised regularly in the Riga and other Baltic provinces prisons became notorious all over Europe (thanks to the revelations made by the British newspaper, the Tribune). This interpellation was answered in

the Duma by the Assistant Minister of the Interior, Makaroff, who, while admitting that the ill-treatment of prisoners had occurred in the Riga prisons, refused to apply to it the name "torture." He said that the officials guilty of the established offences had been already dismissed, and judicial proceedings taken against them. "At present," he said, "we must wait to see what the law courts will say. I consider debates upon this question to be premature."

This declaration was made on April 23, 1907. On May 30th M. Makarof spoke again about the tortures in the Baltic provinces in these words :--

"I am far from the desire to maintain that the police, during interrogations in the Baltic provinces, did not, in some cases, beat the prisoners. I must tell you that last year already, and partly this year, forty-two prosecutions were started against the agents of police for the use of violence. One of these cases was stopped for want of proof ; in another the accused was condemned to one year's penal servitude. The remaining cases are still under examination."

As a matter of fact, however, the Russian newspapers affirm that all the principal organisers of torture in Riga and other Baltic towns continue in their posts. The police official Gregus, who, according to the declaration of Makaroff, was dismissed more

than two years ago, is at the head of the same secret police in the same town of Riga.

The Second Duma soon met the fate of the First. Thereupon the franchise was curtailed, and in the Third Duma, which was convoked in March, 1908, the majority consisted of the nominees of the Government. This majority naturally put a stop to every interpellation that might be embarrassing to the Government, and the terrible state of the prisons was touched upon only occasionally during the debates upon the budget of the Prison Department and of the Ministry of Interior, while the increasing number of executions came to light during the debates upon the Bill for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.

As to the interpellations concerning the prisons which were made in the Third Duma, some of them have already been mentioned in the preceding chapters. It must only be said that the interpellations in the Third Duma, restricted as they are, and submitted to a preliminary debate, have a character of gravity which the "questions" addressed to the Ministers had not in the First and Second Dumas. The interpellations are now made in the name of whole parties, instead individual members, and before being accepted the questions asked are the subject of a preliminary discussion in the Duma, after which they are usually sent before a Commission, which sees whether there are in these questions the elements of an

interpellation. Only when the Commission has accepted the interpellation is it submitted to the Duma, and then the respective Ministers are at liberty of either accepting the debate at once or answering it in the course of one month.

Footnotes

1This chapter has been compiled for this statement by the kindness of a friend.

2Every quotation and every figure in this and in the following pages is taken from the official shorthand reports of the sittings of the Duma.

3The Warsaw lawyers mentioned the following cases :-

On January 2, 1906, in Lublin, a boy of 17, Markovsky, was shot without any form of trial. On January 3rd, 4th, and 18th (O.S.) 16 young men—one of 15 years, two of 17, three of 18, and three of 19—were shot without judgment at Warsaw (after having been tortured).

They also pointed out that the Governor-General of Kielce had issued, on January 13-26, 1906, an order according to which every one found in possession of arms should be executed; and if children under 14 years should be found possessing arms, the death penalty should be applied to their parents. The head of the Polish provinces stopped the application of that order, because it was rendered public. But how many Governors-General acted on such principles without giving them publicity?

The memoir of the Warsaw lawyers was published in all leading dailies. Also in the work of V. Vladimiroff, "Sketch of Present Executions," Moscow, 1906 (Russian).

PART II

CHAPTER VI PROVOCATION TO VIOLENCE AND THE PARTICIPATION OF POLICE OFFICIALS IN CRIME

A painfully prominent feature of present-day Russian life is the frequency of provocation to violence by the secret agents of the Government, which has attained an extraordinary development during the last few years, since public money is lavished upon the three or four different and rival sections of the State's secret police : as also has the participation of various police officers in all kinds of crime, of which many striking instances have been discovered of late. The consequence is, that death sentences are continually pronounced upon young and inexperienced men who have been involved in various plots by the secret agents of the Government. This has developed lately into a widely-spread system among the secret agents and the police officers for attaining promotion and receiving handsome money rewards.

Every one has been hearing lately of a certain Azeff, who was for sixteen years an agent of the Russian secret police, and at the same time the chief organiser of acts of terrorism among the Social Revolutionists, including the murder of the Minister of the Interior, Von Plehve, the Grand Duke Sergius, General Bogdanovitch at Ufa, and of several plots which he denounced at the last moment

against General Trépoff, the Minister of Justice Scheglovitoff, the Grand Duke Nicholas, and the Tsar.

Azeff began as an informer in 1902. This is officially stated in the act of accusation against M. Lopukhin (formerly head of the Police Department, who had confirmed to the Russian refugee, Burtseff, in the autumn of 1908, that Azeff really was a paid agent of the police). In 1904 Azeff, already then in the service of the police and in regular relations with Ratchkovsky, the ex-head of the Russian secret police abroad, organised the murder of the then omnipotent arch-reactionary Minister of the Interior, Von Plehve, who had dismissed Ratchkovsky, and in May, 1905, the same Azeff was the organiser of the murder of the Grand Duke Segius.

Not only is this openly stated by the heads of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, but these two events were precisely what gained Azeff the absolute confidence of the party; and it thus appears that one department of the Russian secret police--the Okhrana, whose special function is the protection of the Tsar--did not hesitate to sacrifice Von Plehve a Grand Duke in order to retain their trusted agent in the centre of the Social Revolutionary Party.

All this might appear incredible, but the Russian secret police had already inaugurated such a policy in 1881.

When, in the first year of the reign of Alexander III. a special police was organised under the name of Okhrana (Protection), for the personal protection of the Tsar, the head of that special police--Colonel Sudeykin--entering into relations with one of the terrorists, Degáeff, seriously invited him to induce the terrorists of the Executive Committee to kill the then Minister of the Interior, Count Tolstoy, and the Grand Duke Vladimir, and afterwards to betray the Committee. After that Sudeykin, having thus proved the incapacity of the ordinary secret police to protect such high personages, and his own cleverness in discovering the guilty persons, would himself be nominated the head of all the police with dictatorial rights, like Count Loris Melikoff under Alexander II., and he would secure a good place for his accomplice Degáeff.

Ratchkovsky and Azeff continued the Sudeykin tradition. In order to protect the Tsar, the Okhrana allowed Azeff to import into Russia revolutionary literature printed abroad, to organise workshops for fabricating bombs, occasionally supplying some money for that; they allowed him also to organise plots against Ministers, Grand Dukes, and the Tsar himself. All this time their diabolic policy was carefully to protect the terrorists marked out by Azeff against an occasional arrest by some other section of the police, so as to have them arrested by nobody but the Okhrana, just at the moment when the plot was going to be

executed. They might thus be sure of the necessary effect being produced on the Tsar, and the victims might be immediately hanged, before they had time to make compromising revelations that would given a clue to the Okhrana conspiracy.

Even escapes were skilfully organised when it was necessary for the Okhrana and its agent, Azeff, to spare some active fighting leader, only to hand him over later on to a Court Martial to be hanged in twenty-four hours. After that they paraded as the real defenders of autocracy ; they obtained considerable rewards in money, proved the necessity of the Okhrana, obtained grants for it, and maintained the "Reinforced Okhrana," with its double pay to all its officers and officials, and its "extraordinary supplementary budget," from year to year.

In order to make sure of it, they also printed a special paper, the Tsarskiy Listok (the Tsar's Leaflet), for the personal perusal of the Tsar (one of the numbers of this paper, obtained from the gendarmerie Archives, was reproduced lately by Burtseff in his review, Byloye), every report about the activity of the revolutionists and every arrest of revolutionists being recorded there for the Tsar, who read it with great interest--everything being done to confirm him in the idea of the necessity of maintaining the state of siege.

Thousands of men are thus sacrificed every year, only to provide the agents provocateurs of the Okhrana with plenty of money.

But Azeff was not an exception. The late M. Pergament communicated in March last (to the *Novoye Vremya*) some facts from his political experience as a lawyer, and these throw some light on the widespread system of provocation used by the Russian secret police. In one case an agent provocateur at Vilna, dressed in a soldier's uniform, complained to some young boys and girls of the bad treatment he had received from his officers. He suggested that the young people should kill the officers, and offered them explosives for the purpose. Happily, they mistrusted him, and did not follow his advice.

At a Court Martial at Vladimir, in February last, it was proved that Lieutenant-Colonel Zavarnitsky, head of the secret police of this city, had sent threatening letters, revolutionary proclamations, drawings of bombs, and even real bombs, to all the authorities, including himself.

During the trial which took place at Cracow, in consequence of an accusation brought by Burtseff against Miss Brzozowski of belonging to the secret police, one of the lawyers said that in Russian Poland he had several times seen agents provocateurs condemned to death for murders they had organised, and known

them to be liberated afterwards and to appear as witnesses in other trials.¹

During the last two or three years the newspapers made known several instances in South-Western Russia where the police of the towns have organised their own bands of so-called "expropriators." Under pretence of being revolutionists who want the money for revolutionary purposes, these bands extorted money from wealthy people under menace of death. In one or two of such cases the fact was established before the Courts, and the respective heads of the police were dismissed.

Quite lately a band of so-called expropriators was arrested at Tiflis, and it appeared that its headquarters were at office of the secret police of that city. In consequence the head of this office, a certain Matchansky, and three of his subordinates were arrested, while the head of the police, Tsikhotsky, ended his life by suicide. Information about this band having been given to the judicial authorities by a young man named Saparof, who had entered the secret police with the intention of finding out the centre of the band of expropriators, this young man was assailed in the street by two men on March 12th last and killed.

Finally, we have the Memoirs of the gendarme General Novitsky, part of which appeared last June in a Kieff paper, and was reprinted in the *Russkiya Vedomosti*. M. Korolenko, the well-known author, vouches for their authenticity.

General Novitsky, it appears, was perfectly well aware of all the revolutionary plans for killing Bogdanovitch, governor of Ufa. Over and over again he had reported this plot to the Minister of the Interior, Von Plehve, whose orders in reply were, "Do not hurry." This went on till Bogdanovitch was killed by men sent for that purpose by Azeff, agent of the Government.

All these facts have been related in the Russian daily Press, and widely circulated through all the leading papers of St. Petersburg and the provinces, including the semi-official paper, *Novoye Vremya*. None of those facts has been contradicted and in no case has the accuracy of the statements even been contested.

Many more similar facts, collected for us in the course of our inquiry, might be added to illustrate the rôle of the police agents in many affairs brought before the Courts Martial for the last two years.

Thus, three men--Jolpezin, Borisoff, and Matrosoff--accused of an armed raid on Yasinsky's factory, came before the Court Martial at Moscow. Jolpezin had already twice been sentenced to death for armed robberies, in which, as he stated at the trial, he had participated as an agent of the secret police--provocation being his object. For the raid on the factory Borisoff and Jolpezin were

sentenced to death--this last for the third time.²

At Sevastopol the agents of the secret police allowed themselves full liberty of action as agents provocateurs. In October, 1906, some shots were fired at a patrol. When those who had shot were arrested, they were found to be local spies. Thereupon Admiral Skrydloff ordered four "agents" to be expelled from the fortress ; but he had not the courage to molest the principal one.³

At Kaluga⁴ five men were brought before a judge on a charge of having robbed a shop. It was proved by witnesses that the instigator of the outrage was one Brovtseff, a lad of 19, who was the personal agent of Captain Nikiforoff, head of the local police. The robbery was committed on March 9th, and martial law was to be discontinued on March 30th. It was shown that the revolver used by Brovtseff had been given him by Nikiforoff, who had promised him full immunity from punishment. When arrested, Brovtseff sent Nikiforoff the following telegram : "Nikolay Mitrofanovitch! You promised me full immunity, and now I am arrested." The jury refused to give a verdict, and insisted that a further inquiry should be made, and the judge made an order accordingly.

At St. Petersburg⁵ the police were informed that among the secret police were several persons belonging to revolutionary

organisations, who had taken part in many robberies. This information was confirmed, and on January 4th an agent of the secret service of M. Ratchkovsky was arrested, together with some others.

In Kieff, by a mere chance, the celebrated case known as the "Aslaniade" was brought to light.⁶ A whole series of suspicious acts of the secret police in Kieff were accidentally discovered. Well-known thieves caught red-handed had been let out of prison by the director of the secret police, Aslanoff, on the mere assurance of an hotel porter that they were "all right." The persons who had caught the thieves had been threatened by Aslanoff with prosecution for defamatory accusations. Criminals had frequently escaped from prison with the help of the secret police. It was proved that secret houses of vice which the authorities had ordered to be closed had continued to flourish with the full knowledge of the police. An inquiry into the conduct of the secret police was ordered by the Governor and is now going on. So far two policemen have been discharged by way of scapegoats. The newspaper Kievlianin states that Aslanoff is resigning.

There is no need to give further instances which prove in what hands the liberty and the life of citizens are placed.

Footnotes

1Novoye Vremya, February 11, 1909.

2Tovarisch, No. 366, September 8, 1907.

3Put, No. 56, October 21, 1906.

4Russkoe Slovo, No. 216, October 21, 1907 ; Tovar., No. 382.

5Ibid., No. 7, January 9, 1908.

6Ryetch, No. 85, April 9, 1908.

CHAPTER VII THE UNION OF RUSSIAN MEN

The English papers often give news of the so-called Union of Russian Men, which was founded in 1906 under the presidency of a doctor, A. I. Dubrovin, to combat the movement towards freedom by all possible means, legal and illegal, and especially illegal.

This Union, composed of the most heterogeneous elements, has enjoyed the special protection of the Emperor, who, up till quite lately, used to wear its badge,¹ and spoke of its members as his most loyal subjects. He lately made them a gift of £1,000, and has from time to time helped them with money. Whenever the President, Dr. Dubrovin, has applied to him in behalf of members of the Union convicted of organising and taking part in pogroms and political murders, or of police officials convicted of torturing prisoners, the Emperor has pardoned them.²

It was lately maintained that the murder of the Duma Deputy, Hertzenstein, was organised with the knowledge of the President of the Union, Dr. Dubrovin, and with the help of agents of the section of the State police known as the Okhrana. The evidence of this was especially strong at the second trial of one of the two murderers, at Kivenepi, in Finland, on March 13-26 of this year. One of the two murderers of Hertzenstein, Polovneff, having

been already condemned by a Finnish Court, M. Prussakoff, secretary to Dr. Dubrovin, stated now before the Court on oath that the President of the Union had asked him to find somebody--preferably somebody dying from consumption--who would agree to declare himself the murderer of Hertzenstein, in exchange for a certain reward and a promise that his escape should be arranged afterwards and his family support in case of death. These revelations, which indicated that Dr. Dubrovin had helped to organise the murder of Hertzenstein, caused the Finnish Court to demand the extradition of Dr. A. I. Dubrovin as an accomplice in the murder, and induced the representatives of the Constitutional Democratic and the Social Democratic parties to make an interpellation in the Duma, of which the text is given below.

The revelations summarised in the interpellation implicate also Count Buxhoevden, a high official at Moscow, and a member of the same Union, in the murder of another Deputy, M. Yolloos, and in repeated attempts to kill Count Witte. These most compromising disclosures freely circulate in the St. Petersburg and Moscow leading dailies.

Here is the full text of the said interpellation in the Duma, made by the representatives of the Constitutional Democratic and Social Democratic parties in the Duma to the Ministers of Justice and Interior on May 12-25 last:--

"In a series of public trials (those of Leonid Andrianoff, Polovneff, Vorobieff, and Seredinsky) the following facts have been proved:--

"1. E. S. Larichkin, accused of the murder of M. Ya. Hertzenstein, was a member of the Union of Russian Men, and, as such, he received from the police officer of the Schlüsselburg district a revolver, the officer explaining to him that the members of the Union of Russian Men had the right of search and of making arrests--the former to be exercised as far as possible in the presence of the police, and the latter without the presence and help of the police. According to the testimony of Larichkin, the revolvers which were given to members of the Union of Russian Men were the property of the Government, and were distributed in the bureau of the St. Petersburg police. It also appears from the affair of Vorobieff and Seredinsky, that if St. Petersburg police officers happened to confiscate revolvers from members of the Union, the President of the Union, Dr. Dubrovin, usually ordered the revolvers to be given back, and this order was obeyed by the police.

"The same Larichkin was also prosecuted for the murder of Mukhin, a working man, whom he killed in the Progonnyi Pereulok, in the presence of a crowd.

"At the present time, according to a persistent rumour, the Union of Russian Men have deprived Larichkin of the possibility of ever appearing before a Court.³

"2. Polovneff, now for the second time under sentence for the murder of Deputy Hertenstein,⁴ was an agent of the Okhrana, a member the 'Head Council of the Union of the Russian Men,' a head of the 'Putiloff Fighting Legion,' and head of the 'Fighting Legion of the Union for Active Opposition to Revolution and Anarchy.'

"3. Kazantseff, one of the accomplices in the murder of Hertenstein, who, as it now appears, incited Fedoroff to kill Count Witte and the Duma Deputy Yollof, and was subsequently killed by Fedoroff at St. Petersburg, was also a member of the Okhrana, a member of the Union of Russian Men, and secretary to Count A. A. Buxhoevden, who is now in the Civil Service acting as attaché to the Governor-General of Moscow.⁵

"The photographs of both Kazantseff and Polovneff, delivered to them as pass-cards by the Okhrana, and bearing the signature of the head of the St. Petersburg section of the Okhrana, Colonel Gerasimoff, were recognised by the gendarme Zapolsky⁶ as representing Kazantseff and Polovneff.

"4. Alexandroff, also sentenced by the Finnish court to months' imprisonment for abetting the murder of Hertenstein, had likewise shown Zapolsky his card of membership of the Okhrana, but Zapolsky could not satisfactorily verify it, as he was hurrying to catch a train.

"After having served his term in the Finnish prison, Alexandroff remained a member of the Union of Russian Men, from which continued to receive moneys.

"5. A man named Rudzik, who is still wanted by the Court as an accomplice in the murder of Hertenstein, also described himself as a member of the Okhrana."

We omit three more paragraphs of less importance only to mention the last paragraph:--

"8. A doctor's assistant named Byelinsky, head of the 'Punitive Expedition' of the Union of Russian Men, acting upon orders received from A. I. Dubrovin, engaged men to kill P. N. Milukoff. The attempt was made, and failed for reasons beyond the control of the organisers. The fact having been made known in the newspapers, Byelinsky has now disappeared.

"Limiting ourselves to a brief mention of the facts already established before the Law Courts, and leaving entirely aside for moment quite a series of other accusations, now under judicial investigation, or made in the Press

only, the authors of this interpellation ask the following questions:--

"Are the Ministers of Justice and the Interior aware—

"1. That the Head Council of the Union of Russian Men, with the knowledge of the police and of the Okhrana Department, has organised fighting legions, and that the police have assisted them to arm these legions with revolvers and bombs?

"2. That quite a number of the members of the Union of Russian Men and its fighting legions have been at the same time members of the Okhrana?

"3. That the same persons took part in the in the murder of Hertzenstein and Yollos, and in attempts against Count Witte and P. N. Milukoff, with the support of the Head Council of the Union of Russian Men, and of its President, A. I. Dubrovin?

"If these facts are known to the Ministers of Justice and of the Interior, what measures do they intend to take in order to stop criminal activity of the Union and its agents?"

Footnotes

1The wearing of this badge was, however, prohibited in May last by a Ministerial order.

2Here are a few instances in point: The President of the Volsk section of the Union of Russian Men applied to the Emperor to obtain the pardon of four townsmen--Dolgoff, Glazoff, Mironoff, and Ereméeff--condemned to hard labour for a pogrom in Volsk on October 20, 1905. He was informed that "His Imperial Majesty has deigned to write, on February 18, 1907, in his own hand, on the said petition: 'I grant pardon to the four condemned,' which decision the Prime Minister has communicated by telegram to the Governor of Saratof." On February 7, 1908, the Russian papers announced that His Majesty had pardoned seven peasants of the province of Grodno, sentenced to imprisonment for pogroms of the Jews.

"The head of His Majesty's Chancery for the reception of petitions, Baron Budberg, has communicated this decree of the Monarch to the President of the Union of Russian Men, Dr. Dubrovin." Of late such pardons have become quite usual.

3We translate verbally this mysterious statement.

4In Finland, by a Finnish Court, after an appeal against the first condemnation.

5The Duma Deputy Yollos, who, like Hertenstein, was a specialist in matters concerning the peasants and the land question, was killed at Moscow by Fedoroff. This young man afterwards expressed his repentance to the Revolutionary Socialists at Paris, and revealed to them that he had acted at the instigation of a certain Kazantseff, whom at that time he believed to be a revolutionary. Kazantseff had also incited him to murder Count Witte, and he had made an attempt to blow up Count Witte in his room by lowering infernal machines through the chimneys. The machines did not explode, and Kazantseff urged him to make another attempt, this time by throwing a bomb at the Count's motor-car on his way to the Council of State. The bomb was to be supplied by Kazantseff; but meantime Fedoroff had learnt that Kazantseff was a member of the Union of Russian Men, and had told the revolutionists about his conduct. They urged Fedoroff to kill him, which he did at St. Petersburg. Having taken refuge in France, Fedoroff recently gave himself up to the French Government, and asked to be extradited to Russia on condition of being tried by a jury, as a common law murderer, for the murders of Yollos and Kazantseff. The extradition has been granted. The text the Russian demand for the extradition of Fedoroff has appeared in Paris Tribune Russe. This extraordinary official document gives all details of the attempt of the Union of Russian Men to kill Count Witte.

6A witness, before the Finnish Court, for the prosecution of Polovneff for the murder of Hertenstein.

CHAPTER VIII REPRESSION

Countless instances could be produced to show how the neglect of all laws has become a normal feature of the Russian Administration, and how the police officials consider themselves as the absolute rulers of the country, and therefore permit themselves the most incredible brutalities. Quite a series of such facts were last winter brought before the session of the provincial tribunal of Kazan and the High Chamber of the Kazan judicial district, several police officers being tried there for the tortures they had inflicted upon free citizens, and even for the murder of some of them.

In the introductory remarks it has been mentioned that a considerable number of prosecutions have been started against persons who, during the years 1905-1907, had taken advantage of the liberties granted by the Constitution and acted upon them.

Quite a series of such cases was brought before the Courts during the last few months. The most striking of them was the affair of two Odessa University professors, the Dean and his assistant, who were prosecuted and condemned for having shown leniency towards the students during the excitement and disorders that took place in the University at the very height of the first months of the Liberation Movement of 1905, and for having used all their influence upon both the students

and the military to pacify them, as well as to avoid an armed conflict between the troops, the police, and the students.

Writing about this affair to the Moscow Weekly, Prince E. Trubetskoy (who is also a lawyer) said: "To bring out such a condemnation the Court had absolutely to ignore the conditions under which the incriminating events took place," and so it was asked to do by the prosecutor. "It is just as if the Dean of the Messina University were prosecuted for not having taken measures to prevent crumbling of the walls during the earthquake." . . . "The worst is," Prince Obolensky writes, "that the same systematical 'cleaning' is going to be done in all universities." "A series of 'administrative dismissals' of professors already taken place in the Odessa University, and our universities are going to be transformed into 'tea-shops of the Union of Russian Men,' . . . all decent men will have go. And when the moral authority of the professors has been destroyed, and all students' unions forbidden then the universities will again be ripe for the revolution."

In April last, a series of such trials took place, described by the Russian Press as "Revenge trials." At Saratov a group of men were prosecuted for having held peaceful meetings in connection with a strike of railway men in September, 1907, and were condemned to imprisonment in fortresses. At Moscow the

local organisation of the Social Democrats prosecuted for what it did at the end of 1905--heaviest accusation being that against a Social Democratic lawyer, Roshkoff, for having edited a daily paper at that time, and inserted in it detailed reports about the progress of the Moscow insurrection of December, 1905.--A hundred and six persons, already tried once, and condemned, for the anti-Governmental meetings and the constitutional manifestations held, in November, 1905, at Novorossiysk, after the Sevastopol rising, were tried again last April--the Military Prosecutor having lodged an appeal against the first sentence of the Court Martial, "because it contained no death sentences!" The new Court, too, could find no means better to please the high authorities, and a third trial will probably take place. In meantime two local lawyers, who had defended the accused, have been exiled from the province; three witnesses--a local teacher, an official of the local post administration, and a military official (a lieutenant-colonel)--who spoke in Court in favour of the accused, have been dismissed. Two Justices of the Peace, who were in the same case, are being prosecuted, and complaints have been made even against officials of the secret police who had spoken before the Court favour of the accused, with the result that the ex-head of police, Kiréef, has been dismissed. Inquiries are also being held to consider the case of a gendarme officer, of the commander of the military district, and even of the President of

the Court Martial himself--all of them being accused of 'leniency towards the accused'.¹

We might add a quantity of similar seemingly insignificant cases that are in reality equally important, owing to their numbers. Thus, also in April last, a lawyer was prosecuted for having spoken, on November 21, 1905, in a village of the Vladimir government about the necessity of a Constituent Assembly, and having exclaimed, "Bread, light, and liberty for the people!" And again, a Cossack woman, Davydoff, was prosecuted for having organised several Liberation meetings three years ago, while she was still a girl. The lawyer was acquitted, but the girl was sent to Siberia in exile, and there are scores of thousands of people--thousands of them employed in the meantime in the regular service of the State--who now live in Russia under the menace of being dragged some day to prison, and thence before a Court Martial, like the woman Davydoff, for having taken part in the strikes and the Liberation Movement of 1905.

During the debates in the Duma, on March 7, 1909, the Deputy Tcheidze gave the following interesting figures. During the last four years 237 ex-Deputies of the Duma were condemned to various terms of imprisonment, eighteen being sent to the Siberian mines. At the same time 406 editors of periodicals were condemned to prison, fortress, and penal servitude; 1,085 periodicals were forbidden. During the last sixteen months 418 fines, to

the amount of £29,100, were imposed by the Administration upon publishers of newspapers.

"Civic freedom in Russia," said Tcheidze, "is now confined to the hangman alone, and executions have become an everyday incident."

Footnotes

1Ryech, April, 1909. Russkiya Vedomosti, February 20, 1909.

CHAPTER IX DRASTIC MEASURES FOR THE RECOVERY OF ARREARS OF TAXES IN FAMINE-STRICKEN PROVINCES

Last summer there was a famine in several provinces European Russia; Smolensk, Minsk, Ufa, Saratov, Simbirsk, and Tambov--the last four belonging to the fertile regions of Russia. At the present time the conditions are still worse, the crop of the year 1908 having been 35,000,000 cwts. below the average crop of the four preceding years, 1902-1906. Nevertheless, the Ministry of the Interior has given orders to levy, in the most stringent way, all the arrears which have accumulated for the last few years, both in regard to the payment of the taxes and in the repayment of famine loans.

"I draw the attention of the Governors," the Prime Minister wrote in his circular of September, 1908, "to the fact that it is absolutely necessary to take the most decisive measures to recover the famine debts--not only because this recovery would give the possibility of granting further loans in case of a future failure of crops, but still more so because it would produce a moral impression on the peasants."

This order of the Ministry was understood by the Governors of the provinces as a command to take drastic measures in levying the arrears; and in some provinces (Vyatka, Tula, and Smolensk) special punitive expeditions

were sent out to collect the arrears--the Governors giving to the commanders of such expeditions full powers to resort to all the measures they might find necessary.¹

The result is that in these provinces a wholesale flogging of the peasants, men and women alike--although this is contrary to the existing law--has been going on in order to recover the arrears. There is no means of obtaining any redress against such treatment--those Governors being best appreciated at St. Petersburg who have taken the most drastic measures.²

For instance, a number of peasants from the Vyatka province have written to their representative in the Duma, complaining of the most abominable instances of wholesale flogging, but no attention is paid to these complaints at the Ministry of the Interior.

Acting upon commands received from superiors, the district chiefs (Zemskiy natchalniks), when they do not resort to flogging, order a sale of the peasants' property. And sold it is--grain in stock, farm buildings, &c., being disposed of on account of such ridiculously small arrears as fifteen, ten, and even five shillings. Scores of such cases, with full names and Wes, are reported in the St. Petersburg and Moscow papers. The sales are said to have become the occasion of a special traffic, the net result of which will be to ruin a great number of peasants;³ for, as there

are often no ordinary buyers at the sales, the only bidders are the police authorities themselves, and they buy for five or six shillings a barn or a stock of grain, and afterwards resell the property to the peasant for three or four times the price they have paid.

The worst is that these punitive expeditions are at work even in those provinces where the last year's crop was bad, and where, indeed, relief expeditions ought to be organised. But from the Government no relief comes, and private organisation of relief is strictly forbidden. At the end of the year 1908 a circular was sent out by the Minister of the Interior, ordering all the branches of the famine-relief society, known as Pirogoff's Society, to be closed, under the pretext that the central bureau of this society had not complied with all the necessary formalities.

The infliction of corporal punishment in villages and towns is in open defiance of the law. Corporal punishment was definitely abolished by law in August, 1904, yet officials of all classes freely inflict it everywhere, even on persons who were previously exempted by law from this degrading punishment. Here are a number of authenticated cases:--

Two students were twice flogged by order of Reuss, the head of police in the district of Elisabethpol. For this he was condemned to a month's imprisonment by the High Court of Tiflis.⁴

Corporal punishment was inflicted on some peasants who wrecked the house of M. Kaptandikoff, in the district of Bobrovsk. This was the subject of an article in the daily paper *Oko* by General Kousmin-Karavaeff, Military Procureur-Général, and a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party in the Duma. The Governor of the province of Voronesh was questioned about the matter, and announced that it was being inquired into. After the inquiry the head of the district police was dismissed, and a prosecution instituted.⁵

In the village of Demianovka, in the Melitopol district, Matnoblin, the head of the district police, ordered four peasants, one of them seventy-five years old, to be brought to the manor-house, and caused the workmen of the place to flog them. After being given over one hundred strokes apiece, they went home in a cart on all fours, unable to sit or lie down, and covered with blood. Two other peasants were flogged before imprisonment.

In the village of Sutkovo, district of Kolomna, a policeman named Mitin so misused a peasant who been arrested for drunkenness that a few days later he died.⁶

In the village of Mayanovo (government of Podolia), Sedletsky, the village policeman, and a hundred Cossacks, went from hut to hut, flogging every one, including women and children, and carrying off all they could lay

hands on. Four of the peasants were sent to a hospital half dead, and any number were wounded and disfigured.⁷

The peasants of Trahaniotovka (Kouznetsky district) began to cut down part of a forest. Saharoff, the deputy head of the district police, who came at the head of a considerable police force to stop them, had nearly every person in the village flogged with rods and nagaikas, and arrested five leaders.⁸ In a village named Seminastosi (Elisabetgrad district), Sedletz, an officer of the police force, went to the village vodka shop, flogged the keeper of it, and beat him with his fists. He then took him to the village police-court, where one policeman sat on his head, and another on his feet, while a third, by order of Sedletz, mercilessly beat him with a nagaika.⁹ At Obsharovka (Samara district) the police tried to extort a confession from some men whom they suspected of being implicated in a theft, by beating them with rods. When several of the men had confessed, they were brought face to face with the owner of the shop that had been robbed, but she identified none of them, either from fear of vengeance or because they were really innocent. At this the police fell on her, and beat her so cruelly that she confirmed all they said.¹⁰

On November 10, 1906,¹¹ Meller Zakomelsky, Governor of the Baltic Provinces, published in all the local newspapers the repeal of the law permitting flogging, which had already been

repealed by the Tsar more than two years before, in August, 1904! It was the fourth repeal of this shameful law, but he wretched inhabitants of the Baltic provinces found it only a mockery. The next day, November 11th, a punitive expedition, under the command of three officers, arrived at Neu Schwanenburg. They arrested ten peasants and two clerks, who were made to give evidence in the case of Julius Ruben. It was desired that they should prove that Ruben was a revolutionary, and had taken part in some secret act of incendiarism. The witnesses had nothing to tell. Ruben had been arrested in the spring and then discharged with a certificate from the police, stating his innocence. Notwithstanding this, in August the punitive column had caused him to be arrested again, and as there was no evidence against him he had been tortured. He was then sent to prison, where he still is. When the punitive column came again on Saturday, November 11th, it was determined to use whatever force might be necessary to obtain witnesses against him. Eight men, including the secretary of the canton and his assistants, were twice cruelly beaten with nagaikas. A man was made to lie down, and two Grenadiers were told off to stand on each side of him, and flog his bare back. Thus every stroke meant four strokes. From forty to fifty strokes--that is to say, two hundred--were inflicted and the victims were then thrown on the floor and left without medical aid. This took place at the manor-house of Neu Schwanenburg.

Flogging has been revived by the rural peasant Courts, with official encouragement, and in imitation of proceedings such as have been described. In the government of Kieff, some peasants, suspected of incendiarism, were beaten till their bones were bared, and then shut up in unheated cells. That night another fire broke out, and the wretched prisoners were again beaten till they gave information of their soidisant accomplice--a girl Of 20. This girl received five hundred strokes. And so on.¹²

Footnotes

1Ryech, January and February, 1909; detailed summary in the St. Petersburg reviews, *Sovremennyi Mir*, March, 1909, and *Russkoye Bogatstvo*.

2About the flogging arrear expeditions in the governments of Tula and Vyatka, see the Constitutional Democrat paper, *Ryech*, February 14 and 18, 1909.

3Ryech, February 18, 1909.

4Novyi Put, No. 66, 1908.

5Ibid., No. 44, 1908.

6Ibid., No. 66.

7Tovarisch, February 27, 1907, No. 203.

8Ibid., No. 131.

9Ryech, March 7, 1908, No. 57.

10Tovarisch, No. 131.

11Ibid., No. 121

12Stolitchnaia Pochta, February 29, 1908, No., 250.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted to give in the preceding pages a correct statement of the violent repression which is going on now in Russia, since the concession of representative government, contained in the Manifesto of October 30, 1905, was nullified by an under-current of organised reaction. In this statement I have done my best to avoid anything that might be a distortion, or an exaggeration of facts, and yet the picture is so terrible that it is almost shaking one's faith in human progress.

Suffering and martyrdom are certainly unavoidable in every struggle for freedom. But the amount of suffering and cruel repression now prevalent in Russia surpasses everything that is known from the lessons of modern history.

Every nation is certainly bound to work out her liberty in her own way and with her own forces, however painful the way may be. But one of the greatest achievements of modern civilisation is precisely the feeling of intimate kinship among all nations. It is now impossible that one nation should suffer, as Russia suffers at the present moment, without these sufferings having their effect upon all the family of civilised nations and awakening among them a general feeling of solidarity. Despotism in one part of the world reacts upon all the races of the world. And when it takes

such brutal and mediæval forms as it takes in Russian prisons and in the punitive expeditions, by means of which autocracy is maintained in the Russian Empire, all mankind feels the effect of such a return to the horrors of the Dark Ages.

To all those who realise the unity of mankind this exposure of the horrors of the present repression in Russia is sure to appeal.

ON THE 1905 REVOLUTION **(1914)**

PETER KROPOTKIN

[Extracted from "Revolution in Russia: Bloody Sunday and the Constitution" in *The Great Events by Famous Historians*, vol. 20 (n.p.: The National Alumni, 1914), pp. 122-137]

Events in Russia are following one another with that rapidity which is characteristic of revolutionary periods. On the 10th of August, 1904, the omnipotent Minister of the Interior, Von Plehve, was killed by the revolutionary Socialist, Sazonoff. Plehve had undertaken to maintain autocracy for another ten years, provided that he and his police were invested with unlimited powers; and having received these powers, he had used them so as to make of the police the most demoralized and dangerous body in the State. In order to crush all opposition, he had not recoiled from deporting at least 30,000 persons to remote corners of the Empire by mere administrative orders. He was spending immense sums of money for his own protection, and when he drove in the streets, surrounded by crowds of policemen and detective bicyclists and automobilists, he was the best-guarded man in Russia better guarded than even the Czar. But all that proved to be of no avail. The system of police rule was defeated, and nobody in the

Czar's surroundings would attempt to continue it. For six weeks the post of Minister of the Interior remained vacant, and then Nicholas the Second reluctantly agreed to accept Sviatopolk Mirsky, with the understanding that he would allow the little local assemblies, or zemstvos, to work out some transitional form between autocracy pure and simple and autocracy mitigated by some sort of national representation. This was done by the zemstvos at their congress in November of last year, when they dared to demand "the guaranty of the individual and the inviolability of the private dwelling," "the local autonomy of self-administration," and "a close intercourse between the Government and the nation," by means of a specially elected body of representatives of the nation who would "participate in the legislative power, the establishment of the budget, and the control of the Administration."

Modest though this declaration was, it became the signal for a general agitation. True, the press was forbidden to discuss it, but all the papers, as well as the municipal councils, the scientific societies, and all sorts of private groups discussed it nevertheless. Then, in December last, the "intellectuals" organized themselves into vast unions of engineers, lawyers, chemists, teachers, and so on—all federated in a general Union of Unions. And amid this agitation, the timid resolutions of the zemstvos were soon outdistanced. A constituent assembly, elected by universal,

direct, and secret suffrage, became the watchword of all the constitutional meetings.

The students were the first to carry these resolutions in the street, and they organized imposing manifestations in support of these demands at St. Petersburg, Moscow, and in all the university towns. At Moscow the Grand Duke Sergius ordered the troops to fire at the absolutely peaceful demonstration. Many were killed, and from that day he became a doomed man.

Things would have probably dragged if the St. Petersburg working men had not at this moment lent their powerful support to the young movement-entirely changing by their move the very face of events. To prevent by any means the "intellectuals" from carrying on their propaganda amid the working men and the peasants had been the constant preoccupation of the Russian Government; while, on the other side, to join hands with the workers and the peasants and to spread among them the ideas of Freedom and Socialism had always been the goal of the revolutionary youth for the last forty years-since 1861. Life itself worked on their side. The labor movement played so prominent a part in the life of Europe during the last half-century, and it so much occupied the attention of all the European press, that the infiltration of its ideas into Russia could not be prevented by repression. The great strikes of 1896-1900 at St. Petersburg and in central Russia, the

growth of the labor organizations in Poland, and the admirable success of the Jewish labor organization, the Bund, in western and southwestern Russia, proved, indeed, that the Russian working men had joined hands in their aspirations with their Western brothers.

Father Gapon succeeded in grouping in a few months a considerable mass of the St. Petersburg workers round all sorts of lecturing institutes, tea restaurants, cooperative societies, and the like; and he, with a few working-men friends, organized within that mass and linked together several thousands of men inspired by higher purposes. They succeeded so well in their underground work that when they suggested to the working men that they should go en masse to the Czar, and unroll before him a petition asking for constitutional guaranties as well as for some economical changes, nearly 70,000 men took in two days the oath to join the demonstration, although it had become nearly certain that the demonstration would be repulsed by force of arms. They more than kept their word, as they came out in still greater numbers-about 200,000 -- and persisted in approaching the Winter Palace notwithstanding the firing of the troops.

This led to the tragedy of "Red Sunday," or Vladimir Sunday. It is now known how the Emperor himself, concealed at Tsarskoe Selo, gave orders to receive the demonstrators with volley-firing; how the capital was divided for

that purpose into military districts, each one having at a given spot its staff, its field telephones, its ambulances. The troops fired at the dense crowds at a range of a few dozen yards, and no fewer than from 2,000 to 3,000 men, women, and children fell the victims of the Czar's fears and obstinacy.

The feeling of horror with which eyewitnesses, Russian and English, speak of this massacre surpasses description. Even time will not erase these horrible scenes from the memories of those who saw them, just as the horrors of a shipwreck remain engraved forever in the memory of a rescued passenger. What Gapon said immediately after the massacre about "the viper's brood" of the whole dynasty was echoed all over Russia, and went as far as the valleys of Manchuria. The whole character of the movement was changed at once by this massacre. All illusions were dissipated. As the autocrat and his supporters had not shrunk from that wanton, fiendish, and cowardly slaughtering, it was evident that they would stop at no violence and no treachery. From that day the name of the Romanoff dynasty began to become odious among the working men in Russia. The illusion of a benevolent autocrat who was going to listen paternally to the demands of his subjects was gone forever.

Distrust of everything that might come from the Romanoffs took its place; and the idea of a democratic republic, which formerly was

adopted by a few Socialists only, now found its way even into the relatively moderate programs. To let the people think that they might be received by the Czar, to lure them to the Winter Palace, and there to mow them down by volleys of rifle-fire -- such crimes are never pardoned in history.

If the intention of Nicholas the Second and his advisers had been to terrorize the working classes, the effect of the January slaughter was entirely in the opposite direction. It gave a new force to the labor movement all over Russia. Five days after the terrible "Vladimir" Sunday, a mass-strike broke out at Warsaw, and was followed by mass-strikes at Lodz and in all the industrial and mining centers of Poland. in a day or two the Warsaw strike was joined by 100,000 operatives and became general. All factories were closed, no tramways were running, no papers were published. The students joined the movement, and were followed by the pupils of the secondary schools. The shop assistants, the clerks in the banks and in all public and private commercial establishments, the waiters in the restaurants-all gradually came out to support the strikers. Lodz joined Warsaw, and two days later the strike spread over the mining district of Dombrowo. An eight-hour day, increased wages, political liberties, and Home Rule, with a Polish Diet sitting at Warsaw, were the demands of all the strikers. We thus find in these Polish strikes all the characteristics which, later on, made of

the general strikes of October last so powerful a weapon against the crumbling autocratic system.

If the rulers of Russia had had the slightest comprehension of what was going on, they would have perceived at once that a new factor of such potency had made its appearance in the movement, in the shape of a strike in which all classes of the population joined hands, that nothing remained but to yield to their demands; otherwise the whole fabric of the State would be shattered down to its deepest foundations. But they remained as deaf to the teachings of modern European life as they had been to the lessons of history; and when the strikers appeared in the streets, organizing imposing manifestations, they knew of no better expedient than to send the order: "Shoot them!" In a couple of days more than 300 men and women were shot in Warsaw, 100 at Lodz, fortythree at Sosnowice, forty-two at Ostrowiec, and so on, all over Poland!

The result of these new massacres was that all classes of society drew closer together in order to face the common enemy, and swore to fight till victory should be gained. Since that time governors of provinces, officers of the police, gendarmes, spies, and the like have been killed in all parts of Poland. In very few cases were the assailants arrested. As a rule they disappeared-the whole population evidently helping to conceal them.

In the meantime the peasant uprisings, which had already begun a couple of years before, were continuing all over Russia, showing, as is usually the case with peasant uprisings, a recrudescence at the beginning of the winter and a falling off at the time when the crops have to be taken in. They now took serious proportions in the Baltic provinces, in Poland and Lithuania, in the central provinces of Tchernigov, Orel, Kursk, and Tula, on the middle Volga, and especially in western Transcaucasia. There were weeks when the Russian papers would record every day from ten to twenty cases of peasant uprisings. In all these uprisings the peasants display a most wonderful unity of action, a striking calmness, and remarkable organizing capacities. In most cases their demands are even very moderate. They begin by holding a solemn assembly of the mir (village community); then they ask the priest to sing a Te Deum for the success of the enterprise; they elect as their delegates the wealthiest men of the village; and they proceed with their carts to the landlord's grain stores. There they take exactly what they need for keeping alive till the next crop, or they take the necessary fuel from the landlord's wood, and if no resistance has been offered they take nothing else, and return to their houses in the same orderly way; or else they come to the landlord, and signify to him that unless he agrees to rent all his land to the village community at such a price--usually a fair price--nobody will be allowed to rent his land or work for him as a hired laborer, and that the

best he can do is therefore to leave the village. In other places, if the landlord has been a good neighbor, they offer to buy all his land on the responsibility of the commune, for the price which land, sold in a lump, can fetch in that neighborhood; or alternatively they offer such a yearly rent; or, if he intends to cultivate the land himself, they are ready to work at a fair price, slightly above the now current prices. But rack-renting, renting to middlemen, or renting to other villages in order to force his nearest neighbors to work at lower wages-all this must be given up forever.

As to the Caucasus, the peasants of Guria (western portion of Georgia) proceeded even in a more radical way. They refused to work for the landlords, sent away all the authorities, and, nominating their own judges, they organized such independent village communities, embodying a whole territory, as the old cantons of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden represented for several centuries in succession.

All these facts point in one direction. Rural Russia will not be pacified so long as some substantial move has not been made in the sense of land nationalization. The theoreticians of the mercantile school of economists may discuss this question with no end of argument, coming to no solution at all; but the peasants are evidently decided not to wait any more. They see that the landlords not only do not introduce improved systems of culture on the

lands which they own, but simply take advantage of the small size of the peasant allotments and the heavy taxes which the peasants have to pay, for imposing rack-rents, and very often the additional burden of a middleman, who sublets the land. And they seem to have made up their minds all over Russia in this way: "Let the Government pay the landlords, if it be necessary, but we must have the land. We shall get out of it, under improved culture, much more than is obtained now by absentee landlords, whose main income is derived from the civil and military service."

The peasant uprisings alone, spreading over wide territories, rolling as waves which flood to-day one part of the country and to-morrow another, would have been sufficient to entirely upset the usual course of affairs in Russia. But when the peasant insurrection is combined with a general awakening of the working men in towns, who refuse to remain in the old servile conditions; when all the educated classes enter into an open revolt against the old system; and when important portions of the Empire, such as Finland, Poland, and the Caucasus, strive for complete Home Rule, while other portions, such as Siberia, the Baltic provinces, and Little Russia, and, in fact, every province, claim autonomy and want to be freed from the St. Petersburg bureaucrats—then it becomes evident that the time has come for a deep, complete revision of all the institutions. Every reasoning observer, every

one who has learned something in his life about the psychology of nations, would conclude that if any concessions are to be made to the new spirit of the time, they must be made with an open mind, in a straightforward way, with a deep sense of responsibility for what is done-not as a concession enforced by the conditions of a given moment, but as a quite conscious reasoned move , dictated by a comprehension of the historical phase which the country is going through.

Unfortunately, nothing of that consciousness and sense of responsibility is seen among those who have been the rulers of Russia during the last twelve months. I have told in my memoirs how certain moderate concessions, if they had been granted toward the end of the reign of Alexander the Second or at the advent of his son, would have been hailed with enthusiasm, and would have paved the way for the gradual and slow passage from absolutism to representative government. Even in 1895, when Nicholas the Second had become Emperor, it was not too late for such concessions. But it was also evident to every one who was not blinded by that artificial atmosphere of bureaucracy created in all capitals that ten years later such half-hearted concessions as a "Consultative Assembly" were already out of question. The January massacres widened that chasm still more. Therefore only an open recognition of the right of the nation to frame its own constitution, and

a complete, honest amnesty, granted as a pledge of good faith, could have spared to Russia all the bloodshed of the recent years. Every intelligent statesman would have understood it. But the cynical courtier, Boulyghin, whom Nicholas the Second and his mother considered a statesman, and to whom they had pinned their faith, was not the man to do so. His only policy was to win time, in the hope that something might turn the scales in favor of his masters.

Consequently, vague promises were made in December, 1904, and next in March, 1905, but in the meantime the most reckless repression was resorted to—not openly, but under cover, according to the methods of Von Plehve's policy. Death sentences were distributed by the dozen during the summer. The worst forms of police autocracy, which characterized the rule of Plehve, were revived in a form even more exasperating than before, because governors-general assumed now the rights which formerly were vested in the Minister of the Interior. Thus, to give one instance, the Governor-General of Odessa exiled men by the dozen by his own will, including the old ex-Dean of the Odessa University, Professor Yaroshenko, whom he ordered to be transported to Vologda! And this went on at a time when all Russia began to take fire, and lived through such a series of events as the uprising of the Mussulmans and the massacres at Baku and Nakhichevan; the uprising at Odessa, during which all the buildings in the

port were burned; the mutiny on the ironclad Knyaz Potemkin; the second series of strikes in Poland, again followed by massacres at Lodz, Warsaw, and all other chief industrial centers; a series of uprisings at Riga, culminating in the great street battles of the 28th of July—to say nothing of a regular, uninterrupted succession of minor agrarian revolts. All Russia had thus to be set into open revolt, blood had to run freely in the streets of all the large cities, simply because the Czar did not want to pronounce the word which would put an end to his sham autocracy and to the autocracy of his camarilla. Only toward the end of the summer could he be induced to make some concessions which at last took the shape of a convocation of a State's Duma, announced in the manifesto of the 19th of August.

General stupefaction and disdain are the only words to express the impression produced by this manifesto. To begin with, it was evident to any one who knew something of human psychology that no assembly elected to represent the people could be maintained as a merely consultative body, with no legislative powers. To impose such a limitation was to create the very conditions for producing the bitterest conflicts between the Crown and the nation. To imagine that the Duma, if it ever could come into existence in the form under which it was conceived by the advisers of Nicholas the Second, would limit itself to the functions of a merely consulting board, that it

would express its wishes in the form of mere advices, but not in the form of laws, and that it would not defend these laws as such, was absurd on the very face of it. Therefore the concession was considered as a mere desire to bluff, to win time. It was received as a new proof of the insincerity of Nicholas the Second.

But in proportion as the real sense of the Boulyghin " Constitution" was discovered, it became more and more evident that such a Duma would never come together; never would the Russians be induced to perform the farce of the Duma elections under the Boulyghin system. It appeared that under this system the city of St. Petersburg, with its population of nearly 1,500,000 and its immense wealth, would have only about 7,000 electors, and that large cities having from 200,000 to 700,000 inhabitants would have an electoral body composed of but a couple of thousand, or even a few hundred electors; while the 90,000,000 peasants would be boiled down, after several successive elections, to a few thousand men electing a few deputies. As to the nearly 4,000,000 of Russian working men, they were totally excluded from any participation in the political life of the country. It was evident that only fanatics of electioneering could be induced to find interest in so senseless a waste of time as an electoral campaign under such conditions. Moreover, as the press continued to be gagged, the state of siege was maintained, and the governors of the different provinces

continued to rule as absolute satraps, exiling whom they disliked, public opinion in Russia gradually came to the idea that, whatever some moderate zemstvoists might say in favor of a compromise, the Duma would never come together.

Then it was that the working men again threw the weight of their will into the contest and gave quite a new turn to the movement. A strike of bakers broke out at Moscow in October, and they were joined in their strike by the printers. This was not the work of any revolutionary organization. It was entirely a working men's affair, but suddenly what was meant to be a simple manifestation of economical discontent grew up, invaded all trades, spread to St. Petersburg, then all over Russia, and took the character of such an imposing revolutionary manifestation that autocracy had to capitulate before it.

When the strike of the bakers began, troops were, as a matter of course, called out to suppress it. But this time the Moscow working men had had enough of massacres. They offered an armed resistance to the Cossacks. Some three hundred men barricaded themselves in a garret, and a regular fight between the besieged working men and the besieging Cossacks followed. The latter took, of course, the upper hand, and butchered the besieged, but then all the Moscow working men joined hands with the strikers. A general strike was declared. "Nonsense! A general

strike is impossible! " the wiseacres said, even then. But the working men set earnestly to stop all work in the great city, and fully succeeded. In a few days the strike became general. What the working men must have suffered during these two or three weeks, when all work was suspended and provisions became extremely scarce, one can easily imagine; but they held out. Moscow had no bread, no meat coming in, no light in the streets. All traffic on the railways had been stopped, and the mountains of provisions which, in the usual course of life, reach the great city every day were lying rotting along the railway lines. No newspapers, except the proclamation of the strike committees, appeared. Thousands upon thousands of passengers who had come to that great railway center which Moscow is could not move any farther, and were camping at the railway stations. Tons and tons of letters accumulated at the post-offices, and had to be stored in special storehouses. But the strike, far from abating, was spreading all over Russia. Once the heart of Russia, Moscow, had struck, all the other towns followed. St. Petersburg soon joined the strike, and the working men displayed the most admirable organizing capacities. Then, gradually, the enthusiasm and devotion of the poorest class of society won over the other classes. The shop assistants, the clerks, the teachers, the employees at the banks, the actors, the lawyers, the chemists, nay, even the judges, gradually joined the strikers. A whole country

had struck against its Government; all but the troops; but even from the troops separate officers and soldiers came to take part in the strike meetings, and one saw uniforms in the crowds of peaceful demonstrators who managed to display a wonderful skill in avoiding all conflict with the army.

In a few days the strike had spread over all the main cities of the Empire, including Poland and Finland. Moscow had no water, Warsaw no fuel; provisions ran short everywhere; the cities, great and small, remained plunged in complete darkness. No smoking factories, no railways running, no tramways, no Stock Exchange, no banking, no theaters, no law courts, no schools. In many places the restaurants, too, were closed, the waiters having left, or else the workers compelled the owners to extinguish all lights after seven o'clock. In Finland, even the house servants were not allowed to work before seven in the morning or after seven in the evening. All life in the towns had come to a standstill. And what exasperated the rulers most was that the workers offered no opportunity for shooting at them and reestablishing "order" by massacres. A new weapon, more terrible than street warfare, had thus been tested and proved to work admirably.

The panic in the Czar's entourage had reached a high pitch, He himself, in the meantime, was consulting in turn the Conservatives (Ignatieff, Goremykin, Stürmer, Stishinsky), who advised

him to concede nothing, and Witte, who represented the Liberal opinion; and it is said that if he yielded to the advice of the latter, it was only when he saw that the Conservatives refused to risk their reputations, and maybe their lives, in order to save autocracy. He finally signed, on October 30th, a manifesto, in which he declared that his "inflexible will was:

" (1) To grant the population the immutable foundations of civic liberty based on real inviolability of the person and freedom of conscience, speech, union, and association,

" (2) Without deferring the elections to the State Duma already ordered, to call to participation in the Duma, as far as is possible in view of the shortness of the time before the Duma is to assemble, those classes of the population now completely deprived of electoral rights, leaving the ultimate development of the principle of the electoral right in general to the newly established legislative order of things.

" (3) To establish it as an immutable rule that no law can come into force without the approval of the State Duma, and that it shall be possible for the elected of the people to exercise a real participation in the supervision of the legality of the acts of the authorities appointed by us."

On the same day Count Witte was nominated the head of a Ministry, which he himself had to form, and the Czar approved by his signature a memorandum of the Minister-President in which it was said that "straightforwardness and sincerity in the confirmation of civil liberty," "a tendency toward the abolition of exclusive laws," and "the avoidance of repressive measures in respect to proceedings which do not openly menace society and the State" must be binding for the guidance of the Ministry. The Government was also "to abstain from any interference in the elections to the Duma," and "not resist its decisions as long as they are not inconsistent with the historic greatness of Russia."

This first victory of the Russian nation over autocracy was met with the wildest enthusiasm and jubilations. Crowds, composed of hundreds of thousands of men and women of all classes, all mixed together, and carrying countless red flags, moved about in the streets of the capitals, and the same enthusiasm rapidly spread to the provinces, down to the smallest towns. True that it was not jubilation only; the crowd expressed also three definite demands. For three days after the publication of the manifesto in which autocracy had abdicated its powers, no amnesty manifesto had yet appeared, and on the 3d of November, at St. Petersburg, a crowd 100,000 men strong, was going to storm the House of Detention, when, at ten in the evening, one of the Workmen's Council of Delegates addressed

them, declaring that Witte had just given his word of honor that a general amnesty would be granted that same night. The delegate therefore said: "Spare your blood for graver occasions. At eleven we shall have Witte's reply, and if it is not satisfactory, then tomorrow at six you will all be informed as to how and where to meet in the streets for further action." And the immense crowd -- I hold these details from an eye-witness -- slowly broke up and dispersed in silence, thus recognizing the new power-the Labor Delegates -which was born during the strike.

Two other important points, besides amnesty, had also to be cleared up. During the last few months the Cossacks had proved to be the most abominable instrument of reaction, always ready to whip, shoot, or bayonet unarmed crowds, for the mere fun of the sport and with a view to subsequent pillage. Besides, there was no guaranty whatever that at any moment the demonstrators would not be attacked and slaughtered by the troops. The people in the streets demanded, therefore, the withdrawal of the troops, and especially of the Cossacks, the abolition of the state of siege, and the creation of popular militia which would be placed under the management of the municipalities.

It is known how, at Odessa first, and then all over Russia, the jubilant crowds began to be attacked by bands, composed chiefly of butcher assistants, and partly of the poorest

slumdwellers, sometimes armed, and very often under the leadership of policemen and police officials in plain clothes; how every attempt on behalf of the Radical demonstrators to resist such attacks by means of revolver-shots immediately provoked volleys of rifle fire from the Cossacks; how peaceful demonstrators were slaughtered by the soldiers, after some isolated pistol-shot -- maybe a police signal -- was fired from the crowd; and how, finally, at Odessa an organized pillage and the slaughter of men, women, and children in some of the poorest Jewish suburbs took place, while the troops fired at the improvised militia of students who tried to prevent the massacres, or to put an end to them. At Moscow, the editor of the Moscow Gazette, Gringnuth, and part of the clergy, stimulated by a pastoral letter of Bishop Nikon, openly preached "to put down the intellectuals by force," and improvised orators spoke from the platform in front of the Iberia Virgin, preaching the killing of the students. The result was that the University was besieged by crowds of the "defenders of order," the students were fired at by the Cossacks, and for several nights in succession isolated students were assailed in the dark by the Moscow Gazette men, so that in one single night twenty-one were killed or mortally wounded.

An organizing hand is seen in these outbreaks, and there is no doubt that this is the hand of the Monarchist party. It sent a deputation to

Peterhof, headed by Prince Scherbatoff and Count Sheremetieff, and after the deputation had been most sympathetically received by Nicholas the Second, they openly came forward in the Moscow Gazette and in the appeals of the bishops Nikon and Nikander, calling upon their sympathizers to declare an open war on the Radicals.

Of course it would be unwise to imagine that autocracy, and the autocratic habits which made a little Czar of every police official in his own sphere, would die out without showing resistance by all means, including murder. The Russian revolution will certainly have its Feuillants and its Muscadins. And this struggle will necessarily be complicated in Russia by race-hatred. It has always been the policy of the Russian Czardom to stir national hatred, setting the Finns and the Karelian peasants against the Swedes in Finland, the Letts against the Germans in the Baltic provinces, the Polish peasants (partly Ukrainian) against the Polish landlords, the Orthodox Russians against the Jews, the Mussulmans against the Armenians, and so on. Then, for the last twenty years it has been a notable feature of the policy of Ignatieff, and later on of Plehve, to provoke race-wars with a view of checking Socialist propaganda. And the police in Russia have always taken advantage of all such outbreaks for pilfering and plundering. . . . Consequently, a few hints from above were enough-and several reactionary papers and two bishops went so far as to openly give such

hints-to provoke the terrible massacres at Odessa, and the smaller outbreaks elsewhere.

Happily enough, there is a more hopeful side to the Russian revolution. The two forces which hitherto have played the leading part in the revolution-namely, the working men in the towns fraternizing with the younger "intellectuals," and the peasants in the country-have displayed such a wonderful Unanimity of action, even where it was not concerted beforehand, and such a reluctance from useless bloodshed, that we may be sure of their ultimate victory. The troops have already been deeply impressed by the unanimity, the selfsacrifice, and the consciousness of their rights displayed by the workmen in their strikes; and now that the St. Petersburg workmen have begun to approach in a spirit of straightforward propaganda those who were enrolled in the "Black Gangs," that other support of autocracy will probably soon be dissolved as well. The main danger lies now in that the statesmen, enamored of "order" and instigated by timorous landlords, might resort to massacres for repressing the peasant rebellions, in which case retaliation would follow to an extent and with consequences which nobody could foretell.

The first year of the Russian revolution proved that there is in the Russian people that unity of thought without which no serious change in the political organization of the country would have been possible, and that capacity for

United action which is the necessary condition of success. One may already be sure that the present movement will be victorious. The years of disturbance will pass, and Russia will come out of them a new nation; a nation owning an unfathomed wealth of natural resources, and capable of utilizing them; ready to seek the ways for utilizing them in the best interest of all; a nation averse to bloodshed, averse to war, and ready to march toward the higher goals of progress. One of her worst inheritances from a dark past, autocracy, lies already mortally wounded, and will not revive; and other victories will follow.

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